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## A History of Sufism in India



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# A History of Sufism in India

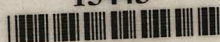
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by  
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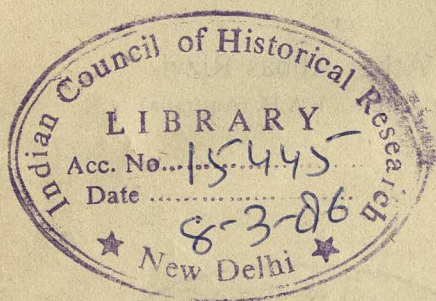
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First published 1983

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Published by Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 54 Rani Jhansi Road, New Delhi 110055 and printed by Print India A-38/2 Maya Puri Phase I, New Delhi 110064



Dedicated  
to the memory of the  
Sufis  
and  
Bhaktas







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## List of Abbreviations

AA	<i>Akhbaru'l-Akhyar</i> by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi.
Affifi,	<i>The mystical philosophy of Muhyid-Din Ibn ul-Arabi</i> , by A.E. Affifi.
Ain	<i>Ain-i Akbari</i> by Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami.
Bodleian,	<i>Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Bodleian library</i> , begun by Ed. Sachau, completed by H. Ethé.
Corbin	<i>Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi</i> , translated from the French by Ralph Manheim.
Ethé	<i>Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the library of India Office</i> by H.E. Ethé.
Fusus	<i>Fusus al-hikam</i> by Ibn 'Arabi.
HSI	<i>History of Sufism in India</i> by S.A.A. Rizvi, vol. I.
Ivanow	<i>Concise descriptive catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal</i> by W. Ivanow.
Izutsu	<i>A comparative study of the key philosophical concepts in Sufism and Taoism</i> by T. Izutsu.
Kashani	<i>Sharh al-Qashani al Fusus al-hikam</i> by Shaikh 'Abd al-Razzaq Kashani.
MRM	<i>Muslim revivalist movements in northern India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries</i> by S.A.A. Rizvi.
Maklubat	<i>Maklubat-i Imam-i Rabbani Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-i Sani.</i>
RIM	<i>Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign</i> by S.A.A. Rizvi.
Rashahat	<i>Rashahat 'ani'l-hayat</i> by Husain al-Waiz Kashifi.
Rieu	<i>Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the British Museum</i> by C.R. Rieu.



## Acknowledgements

THE material for this work was collected over two decades from the libraries of Europe, the Middle East, South-East Asia, India and Pakistan. Its draft was prepared in 1975-76. In the same year, I was able to visit the libraries in U.S.S.R. and studied in Leningrad, Tashkent, Dushanbe, Samarqand and Bukhara for about four months. This visit was arranged through an exchange programme between the Australian National University and the USSR Academy of Sciences, Institute of the Peoples of Asia. The director of the Institute, Academician B.G. Gafurov took a keen interest in my work and I was able to study in an atmosphere of freedom. In Tashkent I stayed long hours in the complex of Shaikh Abu Bakr Qaffal, at Samarqand, I visited the enormous complex of Khwaja 'Ubaidu llah Abrar and in Bukhara I stayed for days near the Qasr-i Arifan complex of Khwaja Bahau'd-Din Naqshband. At Dushanbe, the keepers of Shaikh Ya qub Charkhi's tomb welcomed me warmly. I am grateful to Academician B.G. Gafurov, who unfortunately has since died, and the administrators of the religious and spiritual institutions of Uzbekistan and Tajikstan whose hospitality enabled me to obtain these rare privileges and some perception of the Naqshbandiyya sites mentioned in this book.

I wish to express my deep sense of gratitude to the librarians in those libraries which gave me access to their valuable collections while special thanks are due to the librarians who supplied microfilm copies of their manuscripts or published works.

The work was handed to a well-known Indian press in 1979 and the film setting was almost complete in early 1980 when complications stopped further work. It has now been printed from the proofs which I had corrected for the original printer. I am extremely grateful to Mr. Devendra Jain of Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, for correcting the final proofs and seeing the work through the press.

Miss Stephanie Alasaker, the author's research assistant, took great pains in revising the drafts and typing them for the press. Dr. Salim Akhtar corrected the proofs of some chapters. The author wishes to



thank them along with the printers whose labour enabled the work to see the light of day.

S.A.A. Rizvi

13 February, 1983  
Department of Asian Civilisations  
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Canberra, A.C.T., Australia.



## Note on Dates

MUSLIM dates are given according to the Hijra era or the event marking the Prophet Muhammad's emigration from Mecca to Medina. Although he arrived in Medina on 24 September 622, seventeen years later, the Second Caliph 'Umar (634-44) instituted Muslim dating on the basis of the lunar months, beginning with Muharram. Thus the first Muharram was calculated to have fallen on 16 July 622. The adoption of the lunar calendar leads to the loss of one year every thirty-three years of the Roman calendar. Hence 1 Muharram 1403 Hijra (H) or *Anno Hegirae* (AH) begins on 19 October 1982 AD and not in 2025. Of the two dates separated by an oblique in this book, the first is the Hijra (H) or Anno Hegirae (AH) and the second is AD. Where neither H nor AD is mentioned along with dates, AD is invariably implied.

All equivalent dates have been taken from *Wustensfeld-Mahler'sche Vergleichungs-Tabellen*.



## Introduction

THE first volume of the history of *Sufism in India* outlined the history of sufism before it was firmly established in India and then went on to discuss the principal trends in sufi development in that country from the thirteenth to the beginning of the sixteenth century. Naturally it laid great emphasis on the Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, Firdausiyya and Kubrawiyya orders, but the contributions made by Qalandars and legendary and semi-legendary saints were also discussed. The interaction of medieval Hindu mystic traditions and sufism formed a significant chapter in that book.

The present volume starts with a brief discussion of the mystical philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi, which played a pivotal role in the development of sufic thought and practices in India, as it did in other Islamic countries. The work then deals with the Qadiriyya, Shattariyya, Naqshbandiyya and the Chishtiyya orders. It also analyses the role of Indian sufis in the wider Islamic world, as well as sufi perception of politics and Hinduism. The work concludes with a summary of the Indian sufic contributions and of the impact of modernism on sufism. Many sufis of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries were also scholars of *Hadis* and *Fiqh*, for example Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, Shah Waliu'llah and Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz; but in this work their contribution to sufism alone has been discussed.

Like the first volume of the work, the present volume is based on the study of source-material in Persian, Arabic and Indian regional languages, falling under the following categories:

1. collections of letters written by sufis
2. sufi discourses known as *malfuzat*
3. treatises on the doctrines and practices of sufi orders
4. biographical dictionaries of sufis
  - (a) the individual orders;
  - (b) general
5. biographical dictionaries of poets
6. biographical dictionaries of nobles
7. medieval geographies and accounts written by travellers, sailors and pilgrims
8. general and dynastic histories of the period.



### *Collection of the letters of Sufis*

Sufis, like other individuals, wrote letters to their teachers, disciples, friends and relations. As the leading sufis knew that their letters would subsequently be compiled in volumes, they were often cautious in reacting to different situations and problems. Nevertheless, the letters are more valuable for an understanding of the stages in the development of their theories than the treatises they wrote on their teachings. They also offer a valuable background to some important historical events and social and religious controversies.

The *Maktubat Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah Berang* have recently been published and a copy dated 1108/1696-97 acquired by the present author has been carefully transcribed. Another good copy is available in the Delhi Persian collection of the India Office, London. Both collections contain 78 letters, 44 of which are anonymous; 7 letters are to Shaikh Tajud-Din, 6 to Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (Mujaddid Alf-i Sani), 1 to Shaikh Iahdad, 2 to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din, 3 to Shaikh Farid Bukhari, 1 to Sadr-i Jahan, 1 to the Khan-i-Khanan Mirza 'Abdu'r-Rahim, 1 to Muhammad Sadiq, the Mujaddid's son, 1 to Shaikh Nizam Thanewari, 1 to Maulana Muhammad Sufi and the rest to lesser known sufis. Some letters from the Khwaja contained in the *Zubdatu'l-Maqamat* are not available in the author's collection, and a complete copy of the letters of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah still remains to be discovered. These letters contain the important features of the *Naqshbandiyya-Ahrariyya* teachings disseminated in India by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. The Khwaja's letter to Shaikh Nizam Thanewari shows that he sharply contested the Shaikh's interpretation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and suggested that the Shaikh organize a meeting of 'ulama' and sufis where the Khwaja would offer a correct interpretation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The letters display the Khwaja's ability to explain lucidly the subtle distinctions between different theories.

No collection of sufic letters by any sufi from the seventeenth century onward can match the *Maktubat-i Imam-i Rabbani Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-i Sani* in either number or discussion of controversies. Neither is there any collection which so firmly asserts the author's own viewpoint. Apart from the first twenty selected letters to his *pir*, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, written between 1008/1600 and 1012/1603, and a few others that he might have written at the end of Akbar's reign, the remaining letters were written in Jahangir's reign. His two letters to Shaikh Nizam Thanewari indicate that the Mujaddid resumed the controversy which had begun in Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's time over Shaikh Nizam, and asserted the spiritual superiority of his own theory of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. Some early letters in the *Maktubat* are addressed to the same sufis with whom Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah corresponded. The letters to some important nobles of Jahangir's reign are found mainly in volume one. Clearly the Mujaddid



thought that they might be able to persuade Jahangir to reverse Akbar's policy, replacing it with a militant Sunni orthodox policy. Among the nobles who received the largest number of letters from the Mujaddid were Shaikh Farid Bukhari (Nawwab Murtaza Khan) and the Khan-i-Khanan Mirza 'Abdu'r-Rahim.

The first volume was compiled by the Mujaddid's disciple, Yar Muhammad Jadid al-Badakhshshi al-Talaqani. The letters were arranged and numbered by the Mujaddid himself, who also decided that they should total 313, for the number of the prophets with specific messages was 313, as was the number of fighters with the prophet Muhammad at Badr-hunayn where he gained a decisive victory over the Meccan invaders in Ramazan 2/March 624. The letters of the title of the volume, *Durr-al-ma'rifat* (1025/1616-17), yield the date of the compilation, but the contents of a number of letters, particularly letter No. 11 in which the Mujaddid detailed his personal mystical revelations, were known before 1025/1616-17. For example, the Mujaddid's letter No. 192 to his disciple, Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din Saharanpuri, suggests that Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din had asked his spiritual guide what he meant in letter No. 11 (to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah) by the expression 'he was coloured with a stage higher than that of Hazrat Siddiq-i Akbar (Abu Bakr).' It would seem that the Mujaddid's disciples obtained copies of his letters to study and also circulated extracts and copies of his letters among their sufi friends and rivals.

The second volume contains only 99 letters, for the most beautiful names of Allah (*Asma'-i Husna*) were also ninety-nine. They include letters written between 1025/1616-17 and 1028/1618-19; the letters of the title of the volume, *Nur al-khala'iq* (1028/1618-19) yield the date of compilation. The compiler, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'iy bin Khwaja Chakar Hisari, was an important *khalifa* of the Mujaddid.

The third volume contains 124 letters, but originally it was intended to contain only 113 letters, 113 being the equivalent to the numerical value of the word Baqi, the name of the Mujaddid's *pir*. The first thirty letters were arranged by Shaikh Muhammad Nu'man bin Shamsu'd-Din Yahya, and the compilation was finalized by Khwaja Muhammad Hashim Kishmi, a prominent disciple of the Mujaddid. It contains letters written between 1028/1618-19 and 1031/1621-22; the letters of the *Ma'rifat al-haq'a'iq* (1031/1621-22) yield the date of compilation. Nine letters written between 1031 and 1034 were also included in this volume.

Copies of the entire works of the Mujaddid, including his *Maktubat*, were made by his disciples. There are manuscript copies of all the three volumes in one cover, and individual volumes in separate covers, in different manuscript collections. A unique copy of the manuscript of all the Mujaddid's works in one cover is available in the Oriental Institute Library, Tashkent. It was very carefully and accurately transcribed in 1079/1668-69. All three volumes were published in Delhi in 1288/1871



and 1290/1873-74; in Lucknow in 1877 and 1889; then a more reliable edition was published in Amritsar from 1334/1915 to 1366/1946. Ghulam Mustafa Khan republished the Amritsar edition by photo-litho process in 1972, adding a chronology of the main events from 971/1563-64 to 1068/1657-58, and an index by his son, Siraj Ahmad Khan. The letters were translated into Arabic, Turkish and Urdu and then published.

Although none of the letters in any of the three volumes of the *Maktubat* are dated, the way they have been divided into different volumes and arranged under the Mujaddid's own supervision is very helpful in establishing the broad sequence in which the letters were written. Thus the first volume of the *Maktubat* indicates the stages in the metamorphosis of Mujaddid from the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. It also offers a glimpse of the nature of the puritanically orthodox Sunni policy with which a sufi of unimpeachable Sunni orthodoxy, uncompromising as regards the liquidation of idolatrous Hindus and the dissolution of the perdition-damned Shi'is, wished to replace Akbar's alleged Hinduising and heretical policies.

A letter in the first volume, which Mujaddid wrote to his son Khwaja Muhammad Sadiq (d. 1025/1616), discusses the concept of the *tajdid* (renewal); but the fourth letter of the second volume expressly declares that he was the *mujaddid* (renewer) of the second millennium. The second volume is devoted to clarifying the concepts of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* and answers questions asked by sufi friends or rivals. No really authoritative exposition of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* such as he made to his son Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq is available in this volume. Of the important nobles to whom he wrote the letters in the first volume, Lala Beg (Jahangir Quli Khan, d. 1017/1608), Qulij Khan Andijani (d. 1022/1613), the father-in-law of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, and Shaikh Farid Bukhari Murtaza Khan (d. 1025/1616) had already died. Only the Khan-i Khanan Mirza 'Abdu'r-Rahim, a friend of the Mujaddid's father-in-law, Hajji Sultan Thaneswari, was still alive. Three letters written by the Mujaddid to the Khan-i Khanan are included in the second volume. It is surprising that no letter to Khan-i Jahan, a favourite of Jahangir, is to be found in the first volume. According to Farid Bhakkari, Khan-i Jahan's father, Daulat Khan Lodi, was known to be a Shi'i and believed that only the followers of 'Ali (the fourth caliph of the Sunnis and the first Imam of the Shi'is) were chivalrous. Khan-i Jahan himself was a friend of dervishes and a Sunni, and he seems to have taken the initiative in writing to the Mujaddid. The latter took the opportunity to compose a long letter outlining to him the basic Sunni beliefs, refuting Shi'i beliefs and advising him to eradicate the sinful practices which had infiltrated the administration due to the influence of the worldly-minded '*ulama*'.

The third volume contains some interesting letters which the Mujaddid wrote after his release from about a year's imprisonment in 1621. It



contains the announcement that the title of the Qaiyum had been divinely bestowed on his third son and chosen successor. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum. In letter No. 87, the Mujaddid described to Maulana Salih Kaulabi his mystical achievements, like letter No. 11 in the first volume, aroused a storm of opposition among sufis, and many of the Mujaddid's subsequent letters are devoted to clarifying his position. There were no letters to the Khan-i Khanan (d. 1036/1627), although he was alive, but there is a short letter to the Khan-i Jahan inviting him to obey the Shari'a and fight against the enemies of the faith.

In 1034/1624 the Mujaddid died, but his successor, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, as well as his elder son, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, wrote regularly to their disciples and friends explaining the orthodox Sunni revivalist mission of their father. The *Maktubat-i Sa'idiyya*, containing Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id's letters has recently been published at Lahore, and 9 out of the 100 letters in this collection were addressed to Aurangzib. The letters of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum have also been divided into three volumes. The first volume was compiled in 1063/1652-53, and the second and third volumes were completed in 1073/1662-63 by different scholars. All three volumes were translated into Turkish and published at Istanbul. The original volumes in Persian were published at Ludhiana, Kanpur and Amritsar respectively, and have recently been republished at Karachi. An Urdu translation of extracts from all three volumes has been made by Maulana Nasim Ahmad Amrohavi and published at Lucknow. The first volume contains a letter addressed to the Prince Aurangzib. The second volume contains a letter to him as Emperor, while the third volume has four such letters from the Shaikh. Three of the Shaikh's letters to his son, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, who lived at Aurangzib's court, suggest that both the father and the son considered Aurangzib had attained a very high spiritual status in the mystical hierarchy. Letter No. 239 in the third volume to Shaikh Abu'l-Muzaffar Burhanpuri shows that, some time before his death, a large crowd gathered around Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, trying to seek his guidance. The letters of Muhammad Naqshband and Saifu'd-Din, the sons of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, and those of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad Wahdat, the son of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, have also recently been published in Haydarabad Sind.

The *Kitab al-makatib wa'r-rasa'il* is a collection of 68 of the letters of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, each letter being in the form of a separate treatise. The Mughal nobles to whom he wrote were Murtaza Khan, Shaikh Farid Bukhari, and the Khan-i Khanan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahim; he also wrote to his spiritual guides, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali; Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Niyazi, a former Mahdawi, Shaikh Faizi and his younger brother Shaikh Abu'l-Khair Mubarak were among other eminent addressees. Muftaba'i Press, Delhi, first



published the *Kitab al-makatib* in 1297/1879-80, and then republished them in the margins of the pages of the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* in 1332/1914.

The letters in this collection assert the importance of obedience to the Shari'a and try to reconcile the controversies between the 'ulama' and the sufis. The letters also throw light on popular sufic practices, and on sufi orders in Mecca and Medina. The work, as a whole, bitterly criticizes sufi impostors. To the Shaikh, those of the élite, artisans and common people who sincerely discharged their professional duties and adequately worshipped God were sufis. Like the Mujaddid, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also urged the nobles to persuade the Emperor to reverse Akbar's policies and mould government policies according to the laws of the Shari'a, but the Shaikh's language is mild and sober.

The most important of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's letter was one which was addressed to the Mujaddid shortly before 1031/1621-22. Naturally it is not included in the *Kitab al-makatib*, and has been reproduced by 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi Qasuri in his *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*. Copies of the letter are in the Raza Library, Rampur, the Kutubkhana-i Anwariyya Kakori (Lucknow) and with the present author. K.A. Nizami published the letter in his Urdu *Hayat-i Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dehlawi* from his copy of the *Mukhtasar Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* transcribed in 1288/1871-72. Although Nizami's text is full of errors, Persian scholars with access to the letters of the Mujaddid referred to by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq can very easily correct it. The Shaikh, who was already deeply distressed by the Mujaddid's mystical claims, was provoked into writing this long letter after reading the Mujaddid's letter No. 87 to Maulana Salih Kaulabi. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq sharply criticized the Mujaddid's mystical revelations and drew upon his encyclopaedic knowledge to dispute the Mujaddid's writings. Although the Mujaddid wrote replies, and his disciples tried to show that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq misunderstood the Mujaddid and was misled by his enemies, going to the extent of producing letters showing that a reconciliation had been reached between the Mujaddid and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, the authoritative and well-considered comments of an equally great sufi are the best guide to an understanding of the Mujaddid's mystical teachings and claims.

The Chishtiyya, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah of Allahabad, wrote long letters to some of his contemporaries to explain his understanding of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. They number only eighteen and were written to Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid Jaunpuri, Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri, Mir Saiyid Muhammad Qanauji, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahim Khairabadi, Shaikh Taj Muhammad Fathpuri, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti and Shaikh Hamid Sadrpuri. Other sufis generally had to answer the criticisms of the 'ulama' or were involved in the controversies between the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, but Shaikh Muhibbu'llah had also to answer the criticisms of the greatest physicist, philosopher and logician



of his century, Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri, who enjoyed the patronage of Shahjahan and Sha'ista Khan, the son of the Prime Minister, Asaf Khan. However, in his letters, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah expressively interpreted his concept of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and tried to remove the misunderstanding created by the 'ulama' against him. The evidence in Shaikh Muhibbu'llah's letters suggests that he braved the storm of opposition against him with equanimity and patience. It was not until the appointment of Dara-Shukoh as governor of Allahabad in 1055/1645 that the situation became favourable to Shaikh Muhibbu'llah, who could then live peacefully in his home-town. The collection of the Shaikh's letter in the Delhi Persian manuscripts in the India Office, London, is wrongly called the *Maktubat-i Mulla Mahmud*. A copy of the work is also available at Aligarh.

The *Maktubat-i Khwaja Khwurd* in the Delhi Persian collection of the India Office contains fifty-six letters, discussing important aspects of sufi teachings such as the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, self-manifestation of the Absolute, theophany (*tajalli-Ilahi*), repentance, gnosis, the soul, the heart, the ego, meditation, asceticism, *sama'* and the dialectic of love.

A small collection of the letters of Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim, the father of Shah Waliu'llah (*Anfas-i Rahimiyya*), was published at Delhi in 1915. The letters explain the Shah's teachings on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and make apparent his broadly-based humanitarian outlook.

No complete collection has been published of Shah Waliu'llah's letters. The *Kalimat-i taiyibat*, published at Agra in 1914, contains selected letters of Shah Waliu'llah and Mirza Jan-i Jahan Mazhar. Khaliq Ahmad Nizami refers to two volumes of Shah Waliu'llah's letters, the first containing 281, and the second 77 letters. These are in possession of his maternal uncle, Maulawi Nasim Ahmad Faridi. In 1950 K.A. Nizami published 26 letters of political importance from the above compilation, together with the Urdu translation, introduction and notes.

The first volume was compiled by Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman, after whose death in 1168/1754-55, his father, Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq, the favourite disciple of Shah Waliu'llah compiled the second volume containing 77 letters. There is a complete copy of the first volume in the Raza Library, Rampur containing 281 letters to the following:

1. Shah Nuru'llah, 1, 3-7, 17, 19, 24, 31, 32, 43, 46, 49, 53, 54, 62, 79-88, 103, 141, 226, 227, 253
2. Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq, 2, 10, 12-16, 18, 20, 25-30, 33-42, 44-48, 51, 52, 55-61, 91-97, 99, 100, 106, 110-114, 117, 121-129, 136-138, 140, 142-148, 151-153, 155-163, 166, 170-174, 176, 177, 183-191, 199, 201-217, 221-225, 228-238, 246, 247, 249-252, 254, 259, 261-270, 274, 276-279
3. Shah 'Abdu'llah, brother of Shah Waliu'llah, 8-9, 11, 239
4. Shaikh Muhammad 'Abid, 49



5. A rich man, 50
6. Shaikh Muhammad Qutb, 63-73, 248
7. Makhdum Muhammad Mu'in of Thatta, a leading 'alim of Sind, 74-76, 78, 107, 108, 119, 139, 167
8. Khwaja Muhammad Amin, 89, 90, 275
9. Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah, grandfather of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman, 98, 115, 116
10. A friend settled in Sind, 101
11. Khwaja Muhammad Faruq Kashmiri, a friend of Khwaja Muhammad Zubair, 102
12. Pa'inda Khan Ruhella, congratulating him on his conquest of the eastern mountainous region (probably Pilibhit) and suppression of the infidels, 104
13. Khan-i Zaman Khan, the *faujdar* of Saharanpur, 105
14. Khwaja Nuru'llah Kashmiri, 109
15. Mir Rahmatu'llah, a prisoner in jail, 118, 120
16. Shaikh Abu Tahir al-Kurdi al-Madani, from Mecca, 130-132
17. To a sufi, 133
18. To friends (anonymous) 134
19. Mir 'Abdu'llah Qari, 135
20. Saiyid Muhammad Wajih, a descendant of Saiyid 'Ilmu'llah of Rae-Bareli, 150
21. Shaikh Muhammad Panah Phalti, 154
22. Baba 'Usman Kashmiri, 164, 175, 178-181, 192-195
23. Shaikh Abu Tahir Madani, 165, 168
24. An Arab's son, 169
25. Nawwab Majdu'd-Dawla, 182, 198
26. Maulawi Miyan Dad, 196, 244
27. An eminent man, 197
28. Hafiz Jaru'llah Panjabi, 200, 218, 280
29. Saiyid Najabat 'Ali of Barha, 219, 255
30. A *mujahid* (Crusader) *amir*, 220
31. Nawwab Firuz-Jang Nizamu'l-Mulk Ahmad Shahi, 240, 241
32. Saiyid Muhammad Ghaus Peshawari, 242
33. Maulana Shaikh 'Umar Peshawari, 243
34. Mulla Sher Muhammad, 245
35. Saiyid Ahmad Ruhella, 256
36. A distinguished scholar, 257
37. Maulawi 'Inayatu'llah, a friend of Makhdum Muhammad Mu'in, 258
38. Maulawi Ahmad 'Attarpuri, 260
39. King (Sultan Ahmad Shah), vizier, and nobles, 271
40. Waziru'l Mamalik Asaf-Jah, 272
41. A sufi, 273



## 42. 'Aqibat Mahmud, 281

Letters No. 21, 22, 23, 77, 149 are missing from the present volume which ends after the letter to the 'Aqibat Mahmud. There are two additional sections in the Rampur Collection, one containing 19 unnumbered and 54 numbered letters. The unnumbered letters are to the following:

1. Compiler's grandfather Saiyid Muhammad Jeo, 1-7, 17-22, 25
2. Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq, 8, 14
3. Miyan Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, 9
4. Some friends, 10
5. Shaikh Zainu'l-'Abidin, the Mujaddid's grandson, 11-12
6. Some friends, 13, 23
7. Shaikh Husamud-Din Saharanpuri, 15, 26, 27
8. Some pious women, 24
9. Shaikh Foizu'llah, 16

The numbered letters are to the following:

1. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad, son of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, grandson of the Mujaddid, 1-13, 26
2. Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband, son of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, 14-15
3. Muhammad Mirza Sirhindi, 16-21
4. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hafiz Thaneswari, a favourite companion of Shah Waliu'llah, 22-25, 27
5. Khwaja Muhammad Murad Kashmiri, a favourite companion of Shah Waliu'llah, 28-30
6. Khwaja 'Abdu'r-Rahim Kashmiri, 31-32
7. Shah Muzaffar Rohataki, 33-34
8. Mulla 'Ismatu'llah Qazi Murad, 35-40
9. Shihabu'd-Din Quli, entitled Ghaziu'd-Din Khan, 41-42
10. Saiyid 'Ali Akbar, 43
11. Shaikh Mahmud, 44
12. Hajji 'Abdu'llah Sultanpuri, 45
13. Sabit Khan, 46
14. Recommendation of a dervish, 47
15. Mir 'Izzatu'llah, 48
16. Mir 'Abdu'l-Hakim, 49
17. Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Karim, 50
18. Shaikh Bayazid, 51
19. Shaikh Muhammadi, 52
20. To a sufi, 53
21. To a friend, 54.

The letters to a king (Ahmad Shah Durrani) and letters to Najibu'd-Daula, 2 letters to Asaf-Jah, and 1 to Taj Muhammad Khan Baluch, are not available in the Rampur Collection. It would seem that Shaikh



Muhammad 'Ashiq included them in the second volume, deleting some of the numbered and unnumbered letters of the Rampur Collection. Perhaps he excluded all the unnumbered letters and added the political letters to compile a second volume. Unless Nizami's uncle's collection is collated with the Rampur Collection, a scientific conclusion is not possible. Although Rampur is very near Aligarh, Nizami, like the editors of the Nawal Kishore Press, did not consider it essential to collate the text he chose to publish with the Rampur manuscript.

The first letter of Nizami's edition, addressed to the king, vizier and nobles, deals with Shah Waliu'llah's programme to streamline the administration. After *kalima-i haftum*, in the text Nizami puts an asterisk, and in the footnote writes *kalima-i hashtum*, followed by a few dots, and does not say anything further. The present author has always been puzzled by this omission, but the collation of Nizami's text with the microfilm of the Rampur manuscript suggests that the *kalima-i hashtum* (eighth point) might have been available in Nizami's manuscript but was deliberately omitted in order to make the letter compatible with Nizami's self-chosen cosmopolitan and modernist image of Shah Waliu'llah.

*Kalima-i Hashtum: Anki qadghan baligh bayad numud ki dar shahr-i Islam rusum-i kufr misl Holi wa raftan-i Ganga fash na bayad wa dar 'ashura rawafiz pa az hadd-i i'tidal birun naguzarand wa dar bazarha wa kuchaha i'laniyya shukhiha wa bibakiha nakunand wa la ta'inat ki mi guyand, naguyand.*

Eighth point. Strict orders should be issued in all Islamic towns forbidding religious ceremonies publicly practised by infidels (such as the performance of Holi and ritual bathing in the Ganges). On the tenth of Muharram, Shi'is should not be allowed to go beyond the bounds of moderation, neither should they be rude nor repeat stupid things (that is recite *tabarra*, or condemn the first three successors of the Prophet Muhammad) in the streets or bazaars.

There are significant gaps in the text of other letters too, and comparison of these letters with the Rampur copy indicates deliberate omission, thus undermining the utility of this edition. However, the importance of the collection of Shah Waliu'llah's letters is far-reaching. Although the Shah's works have been published and no new mystical and religious ideas can be gleaned from the letters, the panorama of the eighteenth-century religious and mystical life of Delhi revolving around Shah Waliu'llah can be gleaned only from the *Maktubat-i Shah Waliu'llah*. Sufic strains in the Shah's letters are accompanied by a deep sensitivity flowing from a heart dedicated to the moral and material elevation of the Sunnis.

The *Maktubat-i Kalimi* published by the Mujtaba'i Press, Delhi in 1315/1897-98, contains 132 letters and gives interesting personal details



of the life of Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi and his disciple Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Aurangabadi. It portrays Shah Kalimu'llah's efforts to cautiously propagate the Chishtiyya teachings, and his scheme of conversion of Hindus to Islam, as well as indicating the Chishtiyya attitude towards the Naqshbandiyya and the Emperor Aurangzib. A large number of letters are addressed to his khalifa, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, but some letters are addressed also to other people including Khwaja Daya Rama, a Hindu convert to Islam.

Khaliq Anjum has published a volume containing the Urdu translation of 91 letters of Mirza Jan-i Jahan Mazhar. Some of these letters are included in the *Kalimat-i taiyibat*, but Khaliq Anjum's volume is more exhaustive. Mirza Jan-i Janan's letters answer both theological and mystical questions, besides reflecting the social and political aspects of eighteenth century Indian life.

The letters of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid of Rae-Bareilly are very important for a proper evaluation of the *Jihad* movement and the puritanical reforms of the Sunni faith and sufism. Collections of the Saiyid's letters are available in the British Museum, National Museum, New Delhi, and in several other libraries. A volume of the Saiyid's letters with an Urdu translation has been published in Karachi.

The Chishtiyya *malfuzats* of the fourteenth century offer a deep insight into the structure of the contemporary society and provide valuable glimpses of *khanqah* life. During the period covered by the present work no *malfuzats* like the *Fawa'idu'l-fu'ad* and the *Khairu'l-majalis* were written. However, following the trend of this genre of literature, the surviving *malfuzats* authoritatively reveal the personalities of the sufis whose discourses they embody.

The *malfuzat* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati are available in Rampur, Aligarh and the Delhi Persian Collection of the India Office, but none of them are complete. Moreover they differ from one another. Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's *malfuzat* are exceedingly frank and militant in the assertion of the superiority of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. For example, the Shaikh once said that he who did not believe in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* should be taught the mystical formulae he prescribed, then he would accept it willy-nilly. The last sentence he pronounced in the local dialect which the Shaikh frequently used in his discourses to make them more effective.

The *malfuzat* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah collected by Mir Muhammad Jan discuss the main features of the Naqshbandiyya teachings. The *Bayan ahwal o-malfuzat Khwaja Khwurd* in the Delhi Arabic collection of the India Office Library, London, is a small collection of the discourses of Khwaja Khwurd. It explains the Khwaja's ideas about the *Wahdat al-Wujud* firmly and without any inhibition.

*Ahsanu'sh-shama'il*, the *malfuzat* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auranga-



badi compiled by Khwaja Kamgar Khan, is a good literary production and gives interesting glimpses of Shaikh Nizamud-Din's personal daily routine as well as methods of training. The *malfuzat* of Shah Fakhru'd-Din were compiled by Saiyid Nuru'd-Din Husaini Fakhri and the *malfuzat* of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz by Qazi Bashiru'd-Din. Both works are very important contributions to the history of the religious and social life of the eighteenth-century India. The *Nafi'us-salikin* by Maulana Imamu'd-Din are the *malfuzat* of the nineteenth-century Chishtiyya, Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman Taunsaui. The *malfuzat* of Saiyid Sikandar 'Ali of Allahabad were collected by Saiyid 'Azmat 'Ali Siddiqi of Ghazipur.

Several sufis of this period were eminent authors and poets and these works are discussed in later chapters. Here we would limit ourselves to the mention of the major doctrinal works of various sufi orders. The most popular text of the Shattariyya is the *Jawahir-i khamisa* written by Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. The first draft of the work was made by the author in 929/1522-23 and was perused by his *pir*, Hajji Huzur. The final and most popular draft was prepared by Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus in 956/1549. An Arabic version was made simultaneously. This work gives the esoteric practices of '*abidan* (devotees), *zahidan* (ascetics), and those of the Shattaris who enabled themselves to obtain such mystical supernatural power as no sufi of any other order could gain. The Khudabakhsh Library copy, dated 1077/1666-67 is written in careless *naskh* while the India Office Library copy, dated 1173/1759, is very clear.

In 932/1525 Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus wrote the *Kalid-i makhazin* on the mystical progress of soul. This work attracted considerable attention and a commentary on it was written by his talented disciple, Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati. The manuscript copy of the *Kalid-i makhazin* in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna was transcribed at Ahmadabad on 16 Ramazan 1022/30 Oct. 1613 and contains copious interlinear and marginal notes and glosses. The *Bahru'l-hayat* is the Persian translation of the Sanskrit *Amritkund* giving a detailed account of the mystic practices of *yogis*, particularly those relating to sexual relations. The book has also been published, but a good manuscript is in the India Office Library, London.

The *Risala-i Shattariyya* of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din bin Ibrahim al-Ansari al-Qadiri al-Husaini is a short treatise on the Shattariyya order describing forms of *zikr* popular with the Shattariyyas. The manuscript in the India Office Library is dated 13 Sha'ban 1117/30 Nov. 1705.

Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din 'Alawi Gujarati was a prolific author and a famous sufi teacher. He translated and wrote the Qur'anic exegesis, *Hadis* and *Fiqh*. He wrote a Persian commentary on the *Jam-i jahan-numa* of the famous sufi poet Muhammad Shirin Maghribi (d. 809/1406), a very good copy of which, made in Aurangzib's reign, is available in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna.



Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din also wrote an original treatise in Arabic entitled the *Haqiqatu'l-Muhammadiyya*. This deals with the attributes of God, classes of sufis, the progress of the soul and the mystical interpretation of the Arabic alphabet. It was translated into Persian by Miyan 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din. A good copy of the Arabic original is in Tashkent, and a Persian translation dated Sha'ban 1069/April-May 1659 is available in the Khudabakhsh Library.

The *'Aynu'l-ma'ani* was compiled by Shaikh 'Isa bin Qasim bin Yusuf bin Ruknu'd-Din bin Ma'ruf bin Shihabu'd-Din al-Ma'rufi ash-Shihabi al-Jundi as-Sindi al-Hindi al-Berari al-'Ishqi ash-Shattari, a disciple of Shaikh Lashkar Muhammad 'Arif. It was in 997/1589 that the author, then settled in Burhanpur, was inspired by a dream to write a commentary on his own earlier work dealing with the exegesis of the ninety-nine names of God which he had completed in 989/1581. Both versions were entitled the *'Aynu'l-Ma'ani* but only the later version survives with its magical and mystical interpretation of the epithets of God. The manuscript in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, was transcribed in the seventeenth century.

A comprehensive work on the mystico-magical forms of the Shattariyya *zikr* and esoteric practices was written by Isma'il bin Mahmud Sindhi Shattari of Burhanpur, a disciple of Shaikh 'Isa Sindhi. The work entitled the *Makhzan-i da'wat* and completed, in 1037/1627-8, is available in the Curzon Collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta. In the same collection is the *Asnad-i ashghal-i Shattariyya* describing Shattariyya magical prayers, incantations and various forms of *zikr*. The author, Mulla Ja'far completed it in 1045/1635-36.

The *Samaratu'l-hayat* contains the answers to ethico-mystical questions given by Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din bin Kabir Muhammad bin 'Ali al-Sadiq, al-Gujarati, popularly known as Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din Burhanpuri (d. 1083/1672-73). It was compiled in 1053/1643 by the Shaikh's disciple, 'Ali Askari bin Muhammad Taqi bin Muhammad Qasim al-Khwafi, popularly known as 'Aqil Khan Razi (d. 1108/1696). A good copy of the manuscript dated 29 Jumada II, 1134/16 April 1722 is available in the India Office Library, London.

*As-Simt al-Majid al-jami' li-salasil* by Safiu'd-Din Ahmad bin Muhammad bin 'Abdu'n-Nabi bin Yunus al-Badri al-Qudsi al-Yamani al-Ansari al-Qushshashi al-Dajjani al-Madani, compiled in 1048/1638-39, described the sufic orders in which the author was initiated and also outlines the rites of initiation for novices. Manuscript copies of the work are available in several libraries, and it was published in Hyderabad.

Qushshashi was born in 991/1583 in Medina where he obtained his preliminary education. In 1011/1602-3 he left for the Yemen. In Medina and the Yemen he sat at the feet of altogether some hundred Shaikhs



of different orders, before accepting Saiyid Sibghatu'llah as his principal *pir* from whom he was to trace his sufic affiliations. He is said to have written about 50 books.

The collection of the *Ruba'is* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah mirror the personality of the Khwaja and exhibit his fervent faith in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The importance of the *Ruba'is* of his *pir* prompted the Mujaddid to write a commentary on them. Some sufic *masnawis* (long poems) by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah are also known. The *Ruba'iyat*, the Mujaddid's commentary on it, and the *masnawis* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah were published in Lahore and are available in the *Kulliyat-i Baqi Bi'llah* in the Delhi Persian Collection and other manuscript libraries. The *Nur-i Wahdat*, a short treatise on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* said to have been written by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, was also published in Lahore.

Around 995/1586-87 the Mujaddid wrote two treatises, *Isbat al-Nubuwa* and *Radd-i Rawafiz*. The first is designed to reaffirm the importance of the prophethood and the second is an attempt to refute Shi'i criticism of the first three caliphs and the prophet Muhammad's wife 'A'isha. At the end of 1007/1598 or early in 1008/1599, the Mujaddid wrote his first sufic treatise, entitled *Risala-i Tahliliyya*. The First section of this treatise is an exegesis of the First part of the *Kalima* (*La ilaha illa'llah*'—There is no deity but Allah) based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, and the Second section of the exegesis is a commentary on the Second part of the *Kalima* (Muhammad Rasulu'llah—Muhammad is the Apostle of Allah). The last section is a summary of the *Isbat al-Nubuwa*.

After obtaining initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order from Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah in 1008/1599, the Mujaddid began to write to his *pir* letters explaining his mystical experiences, but he also wrote short treatises. Some time before 1018/1609-10 he had written a treatise entitled the *Ma'arif-i Laduniyya* and an early draft of another treatise, *Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, was also ready. These were in the care of Khwaja Muhammad Siddiq Badakhshi, one of the Mujaddid's *khalifas* who during a visit to Mandu in 1018, showed them to Ghausi Shattari, the author of the *Gulzar-i abrar*. The *Ma'arif-i Laduniyya* is the first treatise by the Mujaddid explaining his own views on the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* and condemning the mystic revelations of the allegedly inexperienced dervishes. The *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* was compiled by Khwaja Muhammad Sadiq Badakhshi from his *pir*'s notes and letters and put in book form. The work was done under the Mujaddid's own supervision, and was finally completed in Ramazan 1019/December 1610. For many scholars and the sufis who did not have access to all the volumes of the *Maktubat*, which in those days was rather difficult, the *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* remained the principal source of information about the Mujaddid's theories, and as such it was frequently criticised by the Mujaddid's rivals. The Mujaddid referred to *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* in several letters, particularly in connection with his 'thesis' about



the respective merits of the *Haqiqat-i Ka'ba*, the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi*, and the *Haqiqat-i Ahmadi* discussed, in the subsequent pages of this book.

Manuscripts of the Mujaddid's treatises are available in libraries in India and in several manuscript libraries elsewhere in the world. The *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* was published at Kanpur in 1309/1891-92; the *Radd-i Rawafiz* was published as part of the Lucknow edition of the *Maktubat*. Recently Ghulam Mustafa has published all the short treatises by the Mujaddid in Pakistan. He has also published a treatise entitled *Mukashifat-i 'Ayiniyya-i Mujaddidiyya* which was compiled by Maulana Muhammad Hashim Kishmi from the papers he discovered in the Mujaddid's house and comprises hitherto unknown writings of the Mujaddid. The present author has drawn upon the Mujaddid's treatises, including the *Mukashifat* in the *Kulliyat* of the Mujaddid's works in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent.

An early Mujaddidi author was one of the Mujaddid's *khalifas* Shaikh Adam bin Isma'il bin Buhwa bin Hajji Yusuf bin Ya'qub Daulat of Banur, near Sirhind, who wrote two important works giving a detailed exposition of the Mujaddid's teachings. In 1037/1627-28 he wrote a book called *Kitab Khulasatu'l-ma'arif fi Asraru'l-'aqa'id*, dealing with the true nature of divinely-inspired gnosis as contrasted with the teachings of the sinful innovators. The manuscript of the work in the India Office Library seems to be in the author's own handwriting.

Shaikh Adam Banuri also wrote the *Nikatu'l-asrar*, in which he repeatedly referred to the *Khulasatu'l-ma'arif*. The *Nikat* deals more precisely with the teachings of the Mujaddid. The manuscript copy in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, is followed by the Shaikh Adam's own *mulhamat* (divinely inspired teachings).

Shaikh Adam Banuri's *khalifa*, Hajji Muhammad Amin Badakhshi, who accompanied the author to Mecca, wrote the *Nata'iju'l-Haramain* embodying the divine inspirations which his *pir* obtained in Mecca and Medina. The manuscript copy of this in the present author's collection was transcribed in 1133/1721.

The *Kanzu's-sa'adat*, or *Ganj-i-sa'adat*, by Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Naqshbandi 'Alawi Husaini, written in 1072/1661-62, discusses the controversies over the succession to the Prophet Muhammad, Sunni teachings about the pre-eminence of the first four caliphs, and Sunni beliefs about the twelve Shi'i Imams. The last section of the work is devoted to a detailed account of sufic principles and practices and it concludes with a biography of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud. The epilogue deals with the justice meted out by the sultans and their deputies. A copy of this work is in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent.

Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah, known as Khwaja Kalan, the elder son of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah wrote a book entitled the *Mublighu'r-rijal*, which is divided into four chapters:

1. philosophy of the peripatetics



2. the beliefs of the scholars of scholastic theology, ancient Sunni authorities and sufis
3. the philosophy of the followers of Ibn 'Arabi, the Ishraqis, and the theories of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid)
4. the importance and pre-eminence of the prophets.

Manuscript copies of this work are available in the Delhi Persian collection of the India Office Library and in Aligarh University Library.

The Delhi Persian collection includes treatises by Khwaja Khwurd which are not known to exist in any other libraries. The *Risala-i soma'* by the Khwaja is a short treatise asserting the importance of *sama'* (audition or music to arouse ecstasy). It quotes the *Lawami'* of Qazi Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri and Maulana 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami.

The *Risala-i Saiyid* asserts Khwaja Khwurd's firm belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and invites sufis to submerge themselves in thoughts of the Unity of Being. The *Risala-i fawa'ih* by Khwaja Khwurd contains some information about sufism. *Parda bar andakht wa parda kai shinakht* and *Partaw-i'ishq*, in the Delhi Persian collection, are also ascribed to Khwaja Khwurd. The former discusses sufism in the style of 'Ainu'l-Quzat Hamadani, and the latter contains invocations in Hamadani's style.

In the sixteenth century many Indian Qadiriyya scholars translated the works of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani into Persian. The most important of these is the *Maktubat-i Ghausiyya*, a Persian translation of eighteen letters by Shaikh 'Abdu'l Qadir followed by a discussion on the doctrines and sufi practices of the Qadiriyya. The letters are in fact short notes on different aspects of sufic teachings and practices rather than communications to individuals. The translator Shaikh 'Ali bin Husamu'd-Din bin 'Abdu'l-Malik bin Qazi Khan Muttaqi, was initiated into the Qadiriyya, Shaziliyya and the Chishtiyya orders. The manuscript in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, is an eighteenth-century copy.

The famous collection of the sermons of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani, entitled the *Futuh al-Ghayb*, was translated into Persian by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi. The translation went a long way to popularizing the teachings of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir and was published several times in India.

The sufic works of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, Dara-Shukoh and Mulla-Shah are discussed below and need not be repeated here. Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq, the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, wrote an interesting sufic work entitled the *Risala-i Agahi-nama* in 1068/1658. It discusses the importance of sufic revelations in religious beliefs. The work quotes Ibn 'Arabi, Shaikh Sadru'd-Din of Quniya and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq. The copy in the Delhi Persian collection of the India Office Library dates from 1114/1702-3. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's grandson, Hafiz Fakhru'd-Din bin Shaikh Muhibbu'llah bin Shaikh Nuru'llah, wrote a Persian commen-



tary on the 'Aynu'l-'ilm. The original Arabic 'Aynu'l-'ilm is an abridged version of the *Ihya' al-'ulum al-din*.

The authorship of the 'Aynu'l-'ilm is disputed: according to some authorities it was compiled by Muhammad bin 'Usman bin 'Umar al-Balkhi, an eighth century/ fourteenth century scholar. Others attribute its authorship to 'Abdu'llah bin 'Abdu'r-Rahman al-Madani. According to Ibn Hajar it was written by an unknown Indian author. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi was very fond of the work, but Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq did not mention the name of its author. However, the book Hafiz Fakhru'd-Din translated into Persian from Arabic was definitely written by Muhammad 'Usman bin 'Umar Balkhi. The Hafiz also added parallel passages from the *Ihya' al-'ulum*. Both the Arabic original and Persian translations are available in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, and Oriental Institute, Tashkent.

The most prolific Chishti author, and an ardent admirer of Ibn 'Arabi, was Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Ilahabadi. In 1041/1631-32 he completed a Persian commentary on the *Fusus al-Hikam*. He also compiled an abridged text of the *Fusus al-Hikam* in Arabic (*Anfas al-khawass*). Manuscript copies of both works are available in Khudabakhsh Library, Patna.

On the basis of the *Fusus al-Hikam* he wrote several Persian treatises on various aspects of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* meant to be read only by the sufi *élite*. Of these the *Manazir-i akhassu'l-khawass*, completed on 13 Ramazan 1050/27 Dec. 1640, differentiates between the knowledge gained by the 'ulama' and the sufic intuition, and goes on to discuss various categories of the sufi *élite* and their achievements. It emphasizes the importance of Divine mercy and invites sufi devotees to inculcate in themselves love for the entire creation. The manuscript in the Delhi Persian Collection containing 198 folios is an early eighteenth century copy.

In 1051/1641 Shaikh Muhibbu'llah started writing the 'Ibadatu'l-khawass which he completed two years later. The work begins with a discussion of eschatology, paradise and hell, and goes on to discuss the mystic significance of ablutions, prayer, alms, fasting and pilgrimage. The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, copy was transcribed in 1125/1713.

In 1053/1643 Shaikh Muhibbu'llah wrote *Haft-ahkam* containing the 7 cardinal principles of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The manuscript copy in the Delhi Persian Collection of the India Office Library was transcribed in the year of the completion of the work and collated with the copy in the author's own handwriting.

The most controversial of Shaikh Muhibbu'llah's works was his *Taswiyya* in which he ardently defended the theories of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. A Persian commentary on the work was written by Khwaja Khwurd, the son of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, in order to popularize the work among scholars who were unable to understand Arabic. Delhi Persian



MS. No. 1167b contains both the original and the translation. In the same collection in the India Office Library there are four more copies of the *Taswiyya*. A copy is available in the Curzon Collection of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta.

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah wrote an exegesis on the Qur'an in Arabic, the *Tarjamat al-kitab* and a different commentary on his own exegesis in Arabic (*Hashiya tarjamat al-Qur'an*). On the pattern of the *Fusus al-Hikam* he wrote the *Anfas al-khawass*. Copies of all three works are available in the India Office Library, London. The following treatises on different aspects of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* by Shaikh Muhibbu'llah are also available:

*Al-Mughalat al-'amma*. India Office and Rampur Libraries

*Tajalliyat al-Fusus*, Aligarh University Library

*Kitabu'l-mubin*, Raza Library, Rampur

*Seh rukni*, Delhi Persian Collection, India Office Library

*Akhassu'l-khawass*, Raza Library, Rampur.

The most popular biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani is the *Bahjat al-asrar wa-ma'din al-anwar* by the Egyptian scholar Nuru'd-Din 'Ali bin Yusuf al-Shattanufi al-Lakhmi al-Shafi'i (b. Shawwal 647/Jan.-Feb. 1250, d. 19 Zu'l-hijja 713/6 April 1314). An abridged Persian translation of the work was made by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haq Muhaddis Dihlawi. No translation of the *Bahjat al-asrar* by Shaikh Badru'd-Din bin Ibrahim Sirhindi survives, but a copy of the Persian translation of the work by Muhammad Habibu'llah Akbarabadi Dihlawi, completed in 1133/1720-21, is available in the Delhi Persian Collection of the India Office Library. It was transcribed in 1140/1727 from the author's own handwritten copy of the original.

A collection of two hundred anecdotes about Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani was compiled by 'Afifu'd-Din 'Abdu'llah bin As'ad al-Yafi'i (born in Yemen, settled at Mecca in 718/1318 and died there in 768/1367). The work *Khulasat al-mafakhir* attracted the attention of the famous Suhrawardiyya sufi, Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Bukhari, who suggested that one of his disciples should translate the work. Manuscript copies of this work are available in many libraries. A translation into Persian verse of some 105 anecdotes from the *Khulasat al-mafakhir* was made by a poet called 'Abdi who completed it in 1051/1641-2.

The *Manaqib-i hazrat Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali* is a short tract on Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali of Mahan. The author, 'Abdu'l-'Aziz bin Sher Malik bin Muhammad Wa'izi, wrote the book because of the devotion of the Bahmanid Sultan, 'Ala'u'd-Din Ahmad Shah II (839/1436-862/1458), to Shah Ni'matu'llah. The work is also dedicated to the Sultan. A copy is available in the British Museum.

In the second half of the 10th/16th century, Shamsu'd-Din Abu'l-Fath Muhammad Multani wrote the *Makhazinu'l-Qadiriyya* as a rejoinder



to the attacks of non-Qadiriyya against the order and its founder. Drawing upon the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* and *Insan al-Kamil*, the author wrote a spirited defence of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's claim to superiority over all other sufis. He also discussed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's *zikrs*, contemplation (*muraqabat*), prayers, invocation, *sama'*, his visions and teachings on *Tawhid*. The author's ancestors came from the Deccan, and he himself lived at Bidar in the Deccan. The manuscript dated 1130/1717 in the British Museum is very dependable.

Shaikh Abu'l-Ma'ali Qadiri Kirmani bin Shaikh Rahmatu'llah, the *khalifa* of Shaikh Dawud of Jhani, also wrote a life of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani in order to popularize the great saint in India. It is entitled *Tuhfatu'l-Qadiriyya* and was published in Siyalkot (1317/1899). It was also translated into Urdu.

No work can match in importance the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar fi asraru'l-abrar* of the great Indian Qadiri saint, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq bin Saifu'd-Din at-Turk Dihlawi. The author is known as one of the great scholars of *Hadis* (Muhaddis) and was a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Musa Qadiri and Shaikh Adu'l-Ma'ali Qadiri. He compiled his *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* in 996/1588, but revised and completed it three years later. The author utilized a large number of sources including the works of the sufis whose biographies he wrote. Some of the sources of information available to the Shaikh are now extinct and the work remains an invaluable mine of information for Indian sufis for the period from the time of Shaikh Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti to the author's own day. In an introductory chapter in the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*, the author gave a short biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir, asserting his superiority over other sufis, but he did not give any specific date or nominate any specific founder of the Qadiriyya order in India. However, his biographical notes on the earlier Qadiriyyas help in outlining the history of the Qadiriyyas in India. Several editions of the work published in Delhi are available.

In 1003/1594-95 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq wrote the biography of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi and his pupil Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab bin Waliu'llah Muttaqi who had settled in Mecca. The manuscript work is entitled *Zadu'l-muttaqin fi suluk tariqu'l-yaqin*. Although the two biographies are available in the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*, the *Zadu'l-muttaqin* throws important light on the links between the religious and intellectual movements of India and of Hejaz. Manuscripts of the work are available in the Raza Library, Rampur, and the British Museum.

Dara-Shukoh's *Safinatu'l-auliya'* is a general biography of Indian and non-Indian sufis, and his *Sakinatu'l-auliya'* contains a detailed discussion of the life and teachings of Miyan Mir and his disciples.

Jahan-Ara Begum, usually called Begam Sahib or Begam Sahiba, the elder sister of Dara-Shukoh, was also interested in sufism. In 1049/1640 she wrote a biography of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti entitled *Munisu'l-*



*arwah*, and on 27 Ramazan 1051/30 December 1641 she completed the *Sahibiyya* a biography of her spiritual guide Mulla-Shah. An Urdu summary of the work was published in the Oriental College Magazine Lahore in 1937.

A detailed year by year account of the life and teachings of Mulla-Shah from 1038/1628-29 to his death was written by his disciple, Tawakkul Beg Kaulabi, who from the sixteenth year of his life remained constantly associated with Mulla-Shah. For some years the author was in Shah-Shuja's service, but when Dara-Shukoh became Mulla-Shah's disciple he gave a minor *mansab* to Kaulabi, who served as a link between Dara-Shukoh and Mulla-Shah. In the beginning of his reign Aurangzib gave him a post in the government service at Kangra. The author, who seems to have compiled a diary of the main events of the life of Mulla-Shah completed his *Nuskha-i ahwal-i Shahi* in 1077/1666-7. Naturally he was interested in glossing over the bitterness between Aurangzib and Mulla-Shah, although he does not seem to have suppressed the main facts. The work is exceedingly rare and only two manuscript copies are known to exist, one in the British Museum, London, and the other in Aligarh.

In the Delhi Persian Collections of the India Office Library, London, there is an incomplete biography of Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa (d. 1103/1692). The name of the author and the title of the work are not known but the surviving pages give valuable details about the life of the Saiyid and the conditions and values of society in his times.

An account of the life and sayings of the Qadiriyya-Chishtiyya Shaikh Badru'l-Haqq Muhammad Arshad bin Muhammad Rashid 'Usmani Jaunpuri was compiled in 1134-5/1721-23 by his successor, Shaikh Abu'l-Faiyaz Qamaru'l-Haqq Ghulam Rashid. Entitled the *Ganj-i Arshadi*, the only manuscript of the work is available in the Aligarh Muslim University Library.

The discourses of Shaikh Abu'l-Faiyaz were collected by his disciple Ghulam Sharafu'd-Din bin Shaikh Imamu'd-Din, who attended his *pir's* assemblies from 11 Muharram to 12 Ramazan 1147/13 June 1734 to 5 Feb. 1735. This compilation contains the biography of Shaikh Abu'l-Faiyaz and a collection of his letters. Some contents are common to both the *Ganj-i Arshadi* and the *Ganj-i Faiyazi*. The two works throw an interesting light on aspects of the political and social events of the reigns of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzib. The manuscript copy of the *Ganj-i Faiyazi* in the Cambridge University Library is dated 1150/1738.

The discourses of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq (d. 6 Shawwal 1136/28 June 1724) of Bansa in the Basti district of Uttar Pradesh were compiled by his disciple Muhammad Khan Razzaqi and edited by Saiyid Ghulam Jilani. A complete biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Bansawi was compiled by the celebrated Mulla Nizamu'd-Din Muhammad Sihalwi, the son of Mulla Qutbu'd-Din Sihalwi. This latter work gives valuable



glimpses of Hindu-Muslim and Sunni-Shi'i relations in eighteenth-century Awadh, and is important for the social history of the period besides being a history of the eighteenth-century Qadiriyya practices.

Kairana in the Muzaffarnagar district of Uttar Pradesh was the place of origin of Shaikh Muhammad 'Abdu'r-Rashid bin Nazr Muhammad Qadiri Kairanawi, who in 1137/1724-5 began writing the *Tuhfa-i Rashidiyya* and completed it in 1143/1730-31. It gives a detailed account of his *pir*, Shah Fath Muhammad Qadiri Kairanawi, called Ghiyasu'd-Din Miyanjiw. It also deals with the predecessors and descendants of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. The manuscript copy in the British Museum was transcribed at the instance of the author.

In 1150/1737 Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid also wrote another work entitled the *Tarikh-i Qadiriyya* which is largely based on the *Tuhfa*. Manuscript copies of the work are available in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, and in Rampur.

An important biography of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband, the founder of the Naqshbandiyya order was written by Salah bin Mubarak al-Bukhari. The author was introduced to the Khwaja by his disciple Khwaja 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Attar (d. 20 Rajab 802/17 March 1400) in 785/1383. After the death of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband on 3 Rabi' I 791/1 March 1389 the author began to compile *Maqamat-i Khwaja Naqshband* containing the discourses, spiritual teachings and tales of the miraculous deeds of the great Khwaja. The manuscript copy in the India Office Library dated 1008/1599-1600 is very accurately transcribed.

A detailed biography of the Naqshbandiyya, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Mu'min al-Abizhi (d. Jumada I, 892/April-May 1487), by his disciple 'Ali bin Mahmud al-Abiwardi al-Kurani is entitled *Rauzat-i s-salikin*. It also contains accounts of the following Naqshbandiyya sufis, copied from the *Nafhatu'luns* :

1. Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Khaliq Ghujduwani (d. 617/1220)
2. Khwaja Muhammad Baba-i Samasi (the successor of Ghujdawani)
3. Saiyid Amir Kulal (d. 772/1371)
4. Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband
5. Khwaja 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Attar
6. Khwaja Muhammad Parsa (d. 822/1420)
7. Maulana Nizamu'd-Din Khamush, disciple of Khwaja 'Ala'u'd-Din
8. Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Imami Isfahani, a disciple of Khwaja 'Ala'u'd-Din
9. Maulana Sa'du'd-Din Kashghari, pupil of Maulana Nizamu'd-Din and *pir* of Maulana 'Ala'u'd-Din
10. Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar (d. 895/1490).

The manuscript in the Buhar section of the National Library, Calcutta, was transcribed in 948/1541.



The *Nafahatu'l-uns min hazaratu'l-quds* is a biographical dictionary by the famous Persian poet Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami. This work, completed in 883/1478-9, gives a reliable account of Irani and Central Asian sufis, particularly of the Naqshbandiyya. It was published in Lucknow and Calcutta, and a new edition has also come out from Tehran.

The most famous biography of the Naqshbandiyyas is the *Rashahat-i 'ainu'l-hayat* by Fakhru'd-Din 'Ali bin Husain al-Wa'iz al-Kashifi, a brother-in-law of Jami. Kashifi lived in the peaceful and culturally rich reign of Sultan Husain Mirza bin Mansur bin Bayqara (873/1469-911/1506) of Herat and wrote a very popular commentary on the Qur'an and the *Rauzatu'sh-shuhada*, or an account of the martyrdom of 'Ali and his successors. The *Rashahat-i 'ainu'l-hayat* deals primarily with the life and teachings of, and anecdotes about, Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah bin Mahmud Shashi, also called Khwaja Ahrar (d. 895/1490), who made the Naqshbandiyya order dedicated above all to controlling political power. In Zu'lqa'da 889/Dec. 1484 and Rabi' II 893/March 1488, Kashifi called on the Khwaja and took down notes of his conversation. The work also gives an account of the earlier Naqshbandiyya *pirs* and of the Khwaja's sons and successors. It has been published in India and in Tashkent.

A very rare biography of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar, entitled the *Silsilatul-'arifin wa tazkiratu's-siddiqin*, was written by Muhammad bin Burhanu'd-Din bin Khwaja Muhammad Riza, known as Maulana Muhammad Qazi. The author became the Khwaja's disciple in 885/1480 and lived with his *pir* for about twelve years. He was very closely associated with many prominent Uzbeks and Mughals and died in 921/1516 at Tashkent. One copy of the work is available in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent, and another is in Aligarh University.

Copying extracts from the *Nafahatu'l-uns* and the *Rashahat*, Abu'l Muhsin Muhammad Baqir bin Muhammad 'Ali wrote in 947/1540-1 a history of the Naqshbandiyya order from the time of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din to Khwaja Ahrar. It includes valuable charts of the spiritual genealogies of the Naqshbandiyya sufis. The only copy of this work is in the India Office Library, London.

The *Silsila-nama-i khwajagan-i Naqshband* was compiled by Nuru'd-Din Muhammad bin Husain bin 'Abdu'llah bin Pir Husain bin Shamsu'd-Din Qazwini in 978/1570-71. It contains tables of the spiritual genealogies of the Naqshbandiyya sufis and also some biographical notices. A manuscript which is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, was copied in 993/1585 from the manuscript written by the author himself.

The *Siraju's-salikin wa-lata'ifu'l-'arfin* by 'Ubaidu'llah Naqshbandi Samarqandi, Shaikh Lutfu'llah Chusti's disciple, is a very valuable



biographical account of the Naqshbandiyya Shaikh Lutfu'llah Chusti (d. 979/1571-72) and some other Naqshbandiyya sufis. It is available in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent.

Although the *Kalimatu's-sadiqin* and the *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani* are general biographical dictionaries, the close contact their author had with the Naqshbandiyya *khanqah* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah warrants their mention here. Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamadani wrote the *Kalimatu's-sadiqin*, telling of 125 sufis buried in Delhi, and the *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, with its biographical accounts of 871 celebrities who lived from the time of Timur to that of Shahjahan. Both works are invaluable because Muhammad Sadiq had unique access to the *khanqahs* of Delhi, Panjab and Kashmir. One of Muhammad Sadiq's uncles, Maulana Hasan Kashmiri, had studied under Maulana Muhammad Yazdi, a prominent Shi'i 'alim of Akbar's court and obtained mystic training under famous sufis such as Shaikh Chain Ladhda, a *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz. When Khwaja Muhammad Baqi Bi'llah finally settled in Delhi in 1008/1599 Maulana Hasan became his disciple also. It was he who persuaded his friend Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid) to visit Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah on his way to Mecca. It would seem that during his stay in Agra and Delhi, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi had become Maulana Hasan's friend. Maulana Hasan was still alive in 1048/1638-39 when Sadiq Hamadani completed his *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*.

Muhammad Sadiq Hamadani was brought up in the intellectual and mystic environment of Maulana Hasan's house. He was tutored by Shaikh Faiz Dihlawi (d. 1022/1613-14) and Shaikh Chand Dihlawi (d. 1029/1619-20), but it was Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi who trained Muhammad Sadiq to write biographical dictionaries. He also became the disciple of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and wrote the earliest known biographical account of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and his *khalifas*, Shaikh Tajud-Din Sanbhali, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid) and Shaikh Ilahtad of Amroha in his *Kalimatu's-sadiqin* completed in 1023/1614. In the *Kalimatu's-sadiqin* Muhammad Sadiq also quoted eleven aphorisms of the Mujaddid's, noting his enthusiasm for Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. Muhammad Sadiq's *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani* is indispensable for scholars interested in the history of the 'ulama', poets and sufis of the seventeenth century and particularly of those connected with Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's *khanqah*.

A detailed biography of Khwaja Khawand Naqshbandi was written by his son, Khwaja Muhammad Mu'inu'd-Din. It reflects Khwaja Khawand Mahmud's efforts to assert his supremacy over other Naqshbandiyyas in India and his inability to extend his activity beyond Kashmir and Tibet. Even in Kashmir, Shi'i opposition greatly frustrated the Khwaja's efforts. The only known copy of this biography, entitled *Mir'at-i taiyiba*, is in the Raza Library, Rampur.



The earliest known biographer of the Mujaddid, however, was Muhammad Hashim bin Muhammad Qasim al-Badakhshani al-Kishmi who first came in contact with the Mujaddid in 1031/1621-2, and a few months later wrote the *Nasamatu'l-quds min hada'iqu'l-uns* containing biographies of Naqshbandiyya sufis of the tenth/sixteenth and the eleventh/seventeenth centuries concluding with a detailed biography of the Mujaddid. The only known copies are in Oriental Institute, Tashkent and Leningrad University Libraries.

Muhammad Hashim also compiled the third volume of the *Maktubat*, but his most famous work is the *Zubdatu'l-maqamat* or *Barakatu'l-Ahmediyyati'l Baqiyya*, completed in 1037/1627-28, three years after his *pir*'s death. The work is divided into three sections: the first gives an account of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah; the second deals with the sons and *khalifas* of the Khwaja; and the third is devoted to an account of the Mujaddid's ancestors, of his father Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad, and the latter's *pir*, followed by a detailed account of the Mujaddid's life, his training, religious routine, miracles, children and the *khalifas*. The work has been published in Lucknow and Kanpur and an Urdu translation of the work was also published at Lahore.

*Manaqibu'l-hazarat* by Hajji Muhammad Amin Badakhshi, who accompanied his *pir*, Shaikh Adam Banuri to Mecca, is a biography of the Mujaddid and his sons, but is mostly devoted to the account of his own *pir* and his teachings and miracles. The copy in the India Office has been disarranged, but the copy in the present writer's personal collection is dated 1133/1721.

Shaikh Badru'd-Din bin Ibrahim Sirhindi, who became the Mujaddid's disciple in 1018/1609-10, also had an ambition to write the biography of his *pir* but he was forestalled by Shaikh Muhammad Hashim Kishmi who became the Mujaddid's *khalifa* much later. Afterwards many personal tragedies in conjunction with completion of the religious and mystical works assigned to him by his patron, Dara-Shukoh, delayed him from fulfilling his ambition. It was around 1053/1643 that he completed the *Hazaratu'l-quds* in two volumes. The first volume contains the biographies of the earlier Naqshbandiyya from Abu Bakr al-Siddiq to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and his sons and disciples. The second volume deals exclusively with the Mujaddid's life, miracles, teachings and answers to criticisms and also with his children and disciples. The personal accounts given by some of the Mujaddid's disciples are based on information which they themselves gave to the author. Neither Shaikh Badru'd-Din nor Shaikh Muhammad Hashim had any personal knowledge of the Mujaddid's early career the story of which is based on later and not necessarily authentic reports. The second volume of the work has recently been published by the Auqaf Department, Lahore.

A very detailed biography of the Mujaddid and his three successors



(*Qaiyums*), entitled *Rauzatu'l-qaiyumiyya*, was written by Abu'l-Faiz Kamalu'd-Din Muhammad Ihsan bin Hasan Ahmad (d. 1149/1736). Begun in 1152/1739 it was completed in the Emperor Muhammad Shah's reign (1131/1719-1161/1748). The only known manuscript of the work is in the Curzon Collection of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, but an Urdu translation has been published. Besides drawing upon the known biographies written by Mujaddidiyya scholars, the author has quoted several works written by his grandfather and father. It would seem that the latter's works and his own far-fetched imagination were the main sources for the legends about the Mujaddid and his successors which he enthusiastically incorporated into the work. Year by year accounts of the following *qaiyums* are recorded in the *Rauzatu'l-Qaiyumiyya*.

First Qaiyum : the Mujaddid

Second Qaiyum: 'Urwatu'l-wusqa Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum

Third Qaiyum : Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband Hujjatu'llah, the son of the second Qaiyum

Fourth Qaiyum: Shaikh Muhammad Zubair.

The author was an eye-witness to the devastation of Sirhind by the Sikh leader Banda Bahadur in the early years of the reign of Shah 'Alam Bahadur Shah I (1119/1707-1124/1712), and then of Nadir Shah's invasion. The successive misfortunes suffered by the Muslims of the Panjab in no way dampened the author's enthusiastic support of the claim that no spiritual or worldly event could take place except at the express command of the *Qaiyums*.

The *Anfasu'l-arifin* of Shah Waliu'llah Dihlawi deals mainly with the biography of the author's father, Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim Dihlawi, and uncle, Shah Abu'r-Riza, but it is also a mine of information about the Shah's other ancestors, teachers, and about the political and social life of Delhi at the end of the seventeenth century and in the early eighteenth century. The concluding section of the *Anfasu'l-'arifin* gives interesting biographical details of eminent sufis in Mecca and Medina in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

A brief autobiography of the author, extending to 14 Rajab 1145/31 Dec. 1732, which has also been published independently, entitled *al-Juz' al-latif fi tarjamat, al-'abd al-za'if*, forms the epilogue of the *Anfasu'l-'arifin*. This has twice been published in Delhi, recently an Urdu translation has been published in Lahore.

Shah Waliu'llah discussed the sufi *silsilas* in *Al-qaul al-jamil* and the *Ham'at*, and devoted a separate treatise to the spiritual genealogies of sufis of different orders entitled *al-Intibah fi salasil auliya' Allah*. The Asafiya manuscript of *al-Intibah* in Hyderabad is dated 1174/1760-1 and it was published in Delhi in 1311/1893-4.

Muhammad Tahir bin Maulana Muhammad Ta'iyib began his *Silsilatu'l-auliya'* in 1159/1746-47 and completed it in 1160. The work



deals with the Naqshbandiyyas of Transoxiana from Baba Samasi to his own time. It also includes the Mujaddid among the Transoxianian sufis. The only copy of the work is in the Oriental Institute, Tashkent.

*Basharat-i Mazhariyya dar faza'il-i hazarat-i tariqa-i Mujaddidiyya* was compiled by Muhammad Na'imullah Bahraichi Hanafi Naqshbandi (b. 1153/1740 d. 1218/1803-4), a *khalifa* of Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar. Besides the biography of his *pir*, the author wrote short accounts of the early Naqshbandiyyas of India from the Mujaddid to Mir 'Abid Sunami, the Mirza's *pir*. More popular is the author's *Ma'mulat-i Mazhariyya* containing biographical notes on Mirza Jan-i Janan, his teachings and copies of *ta'wiz* (charms and amulets) for the treatment of different diseases.

Shah 'Abdu'llah of Batala in the Gurdaspur district of the Panjab, popularly known as Shah Ghulam 'Ali (b. 1158/1745, d. 1240/1824), the successor of Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar, wrote the *Maqamat-i Mazhari*, containing the biography of the Mirza, his discourses, teachings, invocations, and copies of the *ta'wiz*. The work also contains twenty-three letters by the Mirza, and biographical notes on his disciples. The work was published many times in Delhi. The volume published by the Mujtaba'i Press Delhi in 1309/1892 contains an account of Shah Ghulam 'Ali and his discourses and miracles.

The *Makhzan-i Ahmadi*, completed by Muhammad 'Ali in 1261/1845 contains the life of his *pir*, Saiyid Ahmad Shahid of Rae-Bareli, from his birth to his return from Mecca. This work has also been published.

Disappointed with the meagreness of information about Indian sufis in the *A'in-i Akbari* of Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl, Muhammad Ghausi bin Hasan bin Musa Shattari of Mandu, who contemplated writing a biographical dictionary of Indian sufis from 998/1590 onwards, plunged into the task of compiling the *Gulzar-i abrar* which he wrote between 1020/1611 and 1022/1613. It begins with an account of Shah Yusuf Multani who settled in Multan in 550/1155, and goes on to give biographical details of prominent Indian sufis. As a Shattariyya himself, Muhammad Ghausi enthusiastically describes Shattariyya sufis and gives valuable details about the lives of seventeenth-century sufis in general, most of whom were his contemporaries. The Shaikh's relations with his contemporaries were friendly, enabling him to obtain important details about them which he did not fail to include. *The Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian manuscripts in the Asiatic Society Bengal Library* lists all the 575 sufis mentioned in the Society's copy of the manuscript. The manuscripts in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, and the Oriental Institute, Tashkent, are the earliest copies of the work and both are dated 1078/1668.

Among the Chishtiyya sources of this period, the earliest known work is the *Jawahir-i Faridi*, completed in 1033/1623 by 'Ali Asghar bin Shaikh Maudud Chishti of Fathpur-Sikri. It gives a legendary account of Baba



Farid and his descendants. The author knew personally Shaikh Salim Chishti and some of his descendants about whom he has written in the *Jawahir-i Faridi*.

Equally legendary is the *Siyaru'l-aqtab* of Ilah-diya who began it in 1036/1626-27 and completed it in 1056/1646-7. The author was a descendant of Shaikh Jalal Panipati (d. 765/1363) and lived at Kairana in the Muzaffarnagar district of U.P. His grandfather was a surgeon in Akbar's time and his uncle, Muqarrab Khan, was Jahangir's surgeon. The author and his two brothers served as soldiers in Shahjahan's army.

Ilah-diya's *pir*, Shah A'la (d. 25 Rabi' I 1033/16 Jan. 1624), a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Narnauli, had also started his career as a soldier under the nobles of Babur and Humayun but after the accession of Sher Shah to the throne he resigned and became a sufi. The first biography in his *Siyar al-aqtab* is that of the fourth Caliph 'Ali and the last is of Shah A'la. Although the account of the earlier Chishtiyya is legendary in nature, short biographies of Shaikh 'Abdul-Kabir Auliya', a son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, Shaikh 'Usman Zindapir, son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, son of Shaikh 'Usman Zindapir, and Shaikh 'Abdu's-Salam Shah A'la, son of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, are valuable. The work has been published at Lucknow.

A more reliable Chishtiyya biographical dictionary is the *Mir'atu'l asrar* by Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin 'Abdu'r-Rasul bin Qasim bin Shah Budh 'Abbasi 'Alawi Chishti who lived at Dhaniti, a village near Rudauli. This gives the biographies of the Chishti celebrities from the early days of Islam to the death of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri (d. 15 Ramazan 853/1 Nov. 1449). In writing of his own ancestors and his own life the author mentions at length many sufis of the 16th and 17th centuries. The work was begun in 1045/1635-6 and completed in 1065/1654. The manuscript in the Library of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, is dated 1088/1677-8, but the manuscripts in John Rylands Library, Manchester, and the British Museum are of the eighteenth century.

The *Chishtiyya-i-bihishtiyya* or the *Firdausiyya-i qudsiyya* by Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad Chishti Barnawi is a very important work on Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din bin 'Ala'u'd-Din (d. 1038/1628), a grandson of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din bin Bayazid bin Pir Bu'dhan of Barnawa in Jhanjhana near Delhi.

The most valuable collection of biographies of the later Chishtiyyas is the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* of Shaikh Ghulam Mu'inu'd-Din 'Abdu'llah, known as al-Khalifa al-Khweshgi al-Chishti. The author was a Khweshgi Afghan of Qasur (near Lahore) and wrote a biographical account of Khweshgi and other sufis entitled the *Akhbaru'l-auliya' min lisanu'l-asfiya'* in 1077/1666-7. He belonged to a prominent Chishtiyya family of Qasur; his grandfather was a friend of all the eminent sufis of his time such as the Mujaddid, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi and



Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif of Burhanpur. The author himself served under different Mughal nobles and travelled from Qasur to Bengal and then to the Deccan. His ancestors seem to have bequeathed to him a rich library of religious and mystic literature including private letters and documents relating to sufis. The author himself carefully preserved all the documents including those he himself assiduously collected.

Two copies of the manuscripts of the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* in the Panjab University Library begin and end identically. Both have the title *Mukhtasar Ma'ariju'l-wilayat fi madariju'l-hidayat ya Ma'ariju'l auliya' fi madariju'l-asfiya'* and tell us that the work was completed on Wednesday, 24 Rajab 1094/19 July 1683 at Aurangabad. The manuscript in the Shirani Collection (Panjab University, Lahore, library no. 7765) was transcribed in 1111/1699-1700 and contains 656 folios of 19 lines to the page. The manuscript in the Azar Collection of the Panjab University, Lahore, contains 372 folios of 16 lines to the page. This last manuscript is an abridged version of the *Ma'arij* in which many biographies have been deleted; the manuscript in the Shirani Collection is the best known manuscript of the work. Microfilms of both manuscripts are in the Australian National University Library. A copy of the work in the possession of K.A. Nizami is dated 1288/1871-72. The manuscript in the Kutubkhana-i Anwariyya, Kakori (Lucknow) has not been seen by the author personally but at least some of it has been examined by a research assistant.

The *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* is not only invaluable for biographies of the Chishtiyya sufis of the 16th and 17th centuries but is an indispensable source for the sufic controversies which have been incorporated in it without inhibition. Many short treatises by the sufis of the 16th and 17th centuries, such as the letter from Shaikh 'Abdul-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi to the Mujaddid and the *Tuhfa* of Shaikh Fazlu'llah Burhanpuri and its Persian translation have been reproduced in full. Aurangzib's order dated 27 Shawwal 1090/1 Dec. 1679, prohibiting the study of the *Maktubat* of the Mujaddid, and *fatwas* issued by Indian sufis and 'ulama' against the Mujaddid are available only in the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* but their authenticity cannot be doubted.

A detailed Chishtiyya biographical work is the *Sawati'u'l-anwar* or *Iqtibas-u'l-anwar* by Shaikh Muhammad Akram bin Shaikh Muhammad 'Ali bin Shaikh Ilaahbakhsh al-Hanafi of Baras, a village near Karnal in the Panjab. The third section of the work, which contains an account of the Chishtis from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi to the author's *pir* Shaikh Saundha of Safidun (in Jind) is the most valuable part of the work. Shaikh Saundha made Shaikh Muhammad Akram his *khalifa* in 1111/1699-1700 and the *Sawati'u'l-anwar* was begun at Delhi in 1135/1722-3 and completed in Muharram 1142/July-Aug. 1729. There are two MS copies of the work in the India Office Library, London.



The *Manaqib-i Fakhriyya* containing a biography of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, the son of Shaikh Nizamud-Din (b. 1126/1714, d. 1199/1785), was written by Mir Shihabu'd-Din Nizam whose title was 'Imadu'l-Mulk Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang III. He was the son of Mir Muhammad Panah Amiru'l-Umara' Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang II (d. 1165/1752) and a grandson of Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf-Jah. From 1167/1754 to 1173/1759, Ghaziu'd-Din was the kingmaker and the feeble Mughal emperors were his puppets. After 1173/1759 he moved from the court of one petty chieftain to another for protection and finally died in Kalpi on 10 Rabi' II 1215/1 Sept. 1800. He was a poet and wrote eulogies of the Caliph 'Ali and Maulana Fakhru'd-Din. In the *Manaqib-i Fakhriyya* he discussed all the important details of his *pir's* life and gave interesting glimpses of the Maulana's seminary in Delhi and the *sama'* gatherings there. The Maulana's friendly relations with his contemporaries and the respect he enjoyed among them is very clearly brought out. The work was published in Delhi in 1315/1897.

*Zikru'l-asfiya' fi takmila Siyaru'l-auliya' dar manqabat-i Shamsu'l-Huda* by Gul Muhammad Ma'rufi Karkhi Chishti Ahmadpuri is ostensibly a continuation of the *Siyaru'l-auliya'* of Amir Khwurd, but in reality it is a valuable biographical work dealing with the lives of sufis from Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi to Khwaja Muhammad 'Aqil, and of their disciples. The author (d. 1243/1827) was a resident of Ahmadpur Sharqiyya in the former Bhawalpur state of Pakistan and a *khalifa* of Khwaja Muhammad 'Aqil, a *Chishtiyya pir* who was buried at Kot-Mithan in the Dera Ghazi Khan district of Pakistan. The work was published in Delhi.

The *Manaqib-i Sulaimani*, a biography of Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa in Dera Ghazi Khan district, was written by Ghulam Muhammad Khan Jhajjari in 1255/1839-40, but was extended to cover up the events until the death of the Khwaja in 1287/1870-71. The work was published in Delhi and Jhajjar.

Another biography of Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman entitled *Manaqib-i Sulaimaniyya* was written by Hafiz Ahmad Yar of Pakpattan. It was abridged by Yar Muhammad bin Taj Muhammad, an associate of the Khwaja who added some discourses by Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman. Yar Muhammad entitled it *Manaqib-i Sharifa*, but the publisher of the work changed the title to the *Intikhab-i Manaqib-i Sulaimaniyya*.

A biographical work telling of Shah Muhammad Sulaiman Taunsawi, his *pir* Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharawi and some other eminent Chishtiyya sufis, was called *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin* and was written by Hajji Najmu'd-Din Nagauri, a descendant of Shaikh Hadmidu'd-Din Nagauri. The work was published in Rampur and Lahore.

The *Majalisu'l-'ushshaq* is a general biographical dictionary containing an account of seventy-six great mystics beginning with Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq and ending with Sultan Husain Baiqara, the author himself,



The work begun in 908/1502-3 was completed in the following year. It has been printed in India and in Iran, and the copy of the manuscript in the Bodleian Library (No. 1271 dated 959/1552) contains beautiful miniatures.

Among the biographical dictionaries of miscellaneous sufis and sufic orders, the most important is the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* which we mentioned earlier in connection with the Qadiriyyas. Contemporaneous with the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* is the *Akhbaru'l-asfiya* compiled by Shaikh 'Abdu's-Samad bin Afzal Muhammad bin Yusuf Ansari. The compiler was the nephew of Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami who edited his uncle's letters in three volumes called the *Mukatabat-i 'Allami*. It would seem that the author had access to the library and to material collected by Shaikh Faizi with a view to compiling a biographical dictionary of the Indian sufis. The *Akhbaru'l-asfiya* does not contain any significant new information, however, and closely follows the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*. MS. copies of the work are available in the India Office Library, London, the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, and Aligarh University.

Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sirhindi claims to have compiled a large biographical dictionary entitled the *Majma'u'l-auliya*, containing accounts of 1,500 sufis, in 1044/1634-5, but the *Majma'u'l-auliya* now available in the India Office Library consists of 1,400 biographical notices, and was completed by Mir 'Ali Akbar Husaini Ardistani in 1043/1633-4. The work was dedicated to Shahjahan. It would seem that Shaikh Badru'd-Din's *Majma'u'l-auliya* contained more biographies but did not become famous. Ardistani's *Majma'u'l-auliya* is available in the India Office Library the Raza Library Rampur, the Oriental Institute, Tashkent and the Asiatic Society, Calcutta collection. The India Office MS seems to be a copy made from the first draft, and is transcribed in different hands.

Shaikh Muhammad Baqa bin Ghulam Muhammad Saharanpuri (b. 1037/1627-8, d. 22 Sha'ban 1094/16 Aug., 1683), the author of the *Riyazu'l-auliya* written in 1090/1679-80 was also the author of important historical works such as *Ayina-i bakht*, *Mir'at'l-'alam* and the *Mir'at-i jahan-numa*. He was a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, the son of Mujaddid. In the *Riyazu'l-auliya* he gave biographical details of important Indian sufis along with notes on the first four Caliphs and Imams. A good copy of the MS is available in the British Museum.

Legendary in presentation, but giving interesting details of the sufis of Kol (Aligarh), is the *Ashjar al-jamal* or *Akhbar al-jamal* by Muhammad bin Yar Muhammad bin Raji Kamman Kolawi, completed in 1151/1738. The author quotes some unknown sources as his authority and strives with great perseverance to make his ancestors, the Aligarh sufis, appear to be supernatural beings. Copies of the work are available in the Curzon Collection of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta and in Rampur.

Muhammad Aman bin Muhammad Yusuf bin Muhammad Rahim



wrote a general biographical dictionary entitled *Safinatu'l-'arifin*. It gives more detailed accounts of Indian sufis, and ends with the death of Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa. The only known copy of the work is available in the British Museum.

The *Rauzatu'l-'auliya'* of Mir Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgarami (b. 1116/1704, d. 1200/1786) was written in 1161/1748. It first gives information about ten sufis buried at Rauza or Khuldabad about 7 miles from Daulat-abad, and follows this with short biographies of three more eminent people buried there (Aurangzib, Nizamu'l-Mulk Burhan Shah and Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf-Jah). The work also contains short autobiographical notes on the author's life. It has been published at Aurangabad.

Five years later Mir Ghulam 'Ali wrote a larger work entitled the *Ma'asiru'l-kiram tarikh-i Bilgram*. It contains the lives of about 80 saints and mystics belonging to Bilgram (near Lucknow) and its neighbourhood, and also throws light on other Indian sufis. It was published in Hyderabad.

Mir 'Ali Sher Qani Thattawi wrote the *Tuhfatu'l-Kiram*, a general history from the earliest times to 1180/1766-67, concentrating mostly on Sind, and compiled several biographical dictionaries of sufis. In 1202/1787-8 he wrote the *Mi'yar-i salikan-i tariqat* containing short biographical notes on sufis. A most voluminous compilation is the *Bahr-i Zakhkhar* written at Lucknow in 1203/1788-9 by Wajihu'd-Din Ashraf. It contains biographical accounts of the sufis of all important sufic orders up to the author's own time. A small portion of the work was published at Allahabad, but MS. copies are available in several libraries.

The most popular biographical dictionary of Indian sufis is the *Khazinatu'l-asfiya'* of Mufti Muhammad Ghulam Sarwar bin Mufti Ghulam Muhammad of Lahore, begun in 1280/1863-4 and completed in 1281/1864-65. The author had a vast library of biographical dictionaries of sufis and works on sufism. He referred to his sources, but considered all of equal importance and did not bother to sift fact from fiction. Accepting all dates as equally correct, he loved to compose chronograms himself. Nevertheless the book is important as a source-book on the history of sufism.

A biographical dictionary of the different sufic orders of India by Maulawi Ahmad 'Ali Khairabadi (d. 1281/1864), a disciple of Khwaja Sulaiman Taunswai, is the *Qasr-i 'arifan*. It is useful for the study of nineteenth-century sufis. The Oriental College Magazine, Lahore, published the whole work in its issues of May, Aug. and Nov. 1965. An account of the author and the index were published in Feb. 1966.

Some sufis were also poets and short biographical accounts and their verses from their collections of poems are given in the biographical dictionaries of poets. Information on poets who flourished from the end of the 9th/15th to the middle of the 10th/16th century is given in the *Tuhfa-i Sami* compiled by Abu'l-Nasr Sam Mirza, son of Shah Isma'il, I in



c. 957/1550. It has been published in Tehran. The *Nafa'isu'l-ma'asir* of Mir 'Ala'u'd-Daula Kami bin Yahya Saifi Husaini Qazwini, compiled in 973/1565-6, gives interesting details of the social life of sufi-poets.

Mulla Muhammad 'Muhammad' Sufi Mazandarani was born at Amul but migrated to Shiraz. After travelling extensively in Iran, in Akbar's reign he settled at Ahmadabad where he became a friend of many sufis. In India also he travelled to a larger number of places and died in 1032/1623 or 1035/1625-26. The *But-khana* he compiled in 1010/1601-2 contains large selections from the *diwans* of 126 poets. It is available in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Taqi Auhadi, who left Shiraz for India in Rajab 1015/Nov. 1606, stayed in Lahore for eighteen months, for more than a year in Agra, and about three years in Gujarat, returning to Agra in 1020/1611-2, compiled an anthology of Persian poets entitled *Firdaus-i khayal-i Auhadi*. Adding biographical notes to his selection of verses, he completed the '*Arafatu'l-ashiqin*' at Agra in 1024/1615-16. This great biographical dictionary, containing the lives of 3000 poets, is available in the Khudabakhsh Library, Patna.

The *Majma'u'sh-shu'ara'-i Jahangir Shahi* by Qati'i, only the third part of which is available in the Bodleian Library, is a very important biographical dictionary of Indian poets.

The *Tarikh-i Jahangiri* by Mutribi, begun in Rajab 1034/April-May 1625, and dedicated to Jahangir, contains the biographical accounts of the poets of Transoxiana who flourished at the courts of Akbar and Jahangir. The only copy of the MS is in the India Office Library.

A more detailed biographical dictionary of poets of the reigns of Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangzib is the *Kalimatu'sh-shu'ara'* compiled in 1093/1682 by Mirza Muhammad Afzal Sarkhwush. MS. copies of the work are available in many libraries.

The most important biographical dictionary of the poets of the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzib, which contains an account of some other important earlier poets, is the *Mir'atu'l-khayal* of Sher Khan bin 'Ali Amjad Khan Lodi, completed in 1102/1690-91. For some years the author was in the service of Prince Shah Shuja', viceroy of Bengal. The work has been published in Calcutta, Bareilly and Bombay. A very large and popular biographical dictionary of Persian poets is the *Riyazu'sh-shu'ara'*, written mainly in 1160/1747 and completed in the following year by Nawwab Khan-i Zaman Bahadur Zafar-Jang 'Ali Quli Khan Walih Daghistani. Born at Isfahan in 1124/1712, he suffered from the calamities that befell Iran during the decline of the Safawid kingdom and the occupation of Iran by the Afghans. In 1147/1734-35 he reached Delhi, and was offered high *mansabs* by Mughal emperors from Muhammad Shah to 'Azizu'd-Din 'Alamgir II (1167/1754-1173/1760). On 1 Rajab 1169/1 April 1756 he died at Delhi. MS. copies of the *Riyazu'sh-shu'ara'*



are available in many Indian and Western libraries; the Lib. Cat. of the Asiatic Society, Calcutta, gives a list of all the biographies in the work.

A very important biography of nobles is the *Zakhiratu'l-khawanin* by Shaikh Farid Bhakkari dealing with Indian nobles from the time of Akbar to 1061/1650-51. The author's father, Shaikh Ma'ruf, served for some time as the *sadr* of the *sarkar* of Bhakkar and was a man of considerable influence. Shaikh Farid was devoted to a number of contemporary sufis to whom he refers with reverence in *Zakhiratu'l-khawanin*. He served under many Mughal nobles: as *wakil* under Abu'l-Fath Dakhni, as the *amin* of *suba* Berar, *diwan* of *suba* Gujarat, and for a considerable time under Khan-i Jahan Lodi. He also remained for some time attached to Mahabat Khan, and later to Sarandaz Khan Qalmaq who held the charge of Dalma'u with the *faujdari* of seventy-two *parganas* of Lucknow. His last assignment was in the capacity of *amin* and *waqi'a-nawis*, a post which he was holding in 1061/1650-51. He was patronized by other Mughal nobles too, and had an intimate personal knowledge about their character, beliefs and exploits. The work is throughout interspersed with interesting anecdotes which disclose the ways and manners of the nobility, 'ulama', sufis, and men of other walks of life of 16th and 17th century India. He has drawn extensively upon the chronicles written in the period. The author's personal touch has made the work indispensable for a study of the cultural and social history of the Mughals in the 16th and 17th centuries.

MS. copies of the work are rare, but the Pakistan Historical Society has recently published it in three volumes.

The *Ma'asiru'l-umara'* containing biographical accounts of the Mughal nobles from Akbar's reign to the author's own time was begun in 1155/1742 and remained unfinished at the time of death of the author, Mir 'Abdu'r-Razzaq bin Mir Hasan al-Husaini Khwafi Aurangabadi. It contains a wealth of information about the political, religious and social history of the period it covers. The ancestors of the author had migrated from Khwaf to India in Akbar's reign and held high *mansabs* under the Mughals. The author, who was born on 28 Ramazan 1111/20 March 1700, in his early twenties entered the service of Nawwab Nizamul-Mulk Asaf-Jah and subsequently received the title of Samsamu'd-Daula Shah Nawaz Khan Samsam-Jang. The last years of his life were clouded by tragedies arising from the French political dominance over the Nizams. On 3 Ramazan 1171/11 May 1758 he was killed.

Although Shah Nawaz considered the *Zakhiratu'l-khawanin* unreliable, he incorporated almost the whole of it in the *Ma'asiru'l-umara'*, adding additional anecdotes and political details to the biographies of nobles from the time of Akbar to that of Shahjahan. The biographical accounts of nobles from Aurangzib's reign to his own time are also rich in details about religious and cultural matters. Ghulam 'Ali Azad Bilgarami added



a life of the author and some more biographies to the work. 'Abdu'l-Ha'i worked further on the MS. of the *Ma'asiru'l-umara'*, adding a biography of Ghulam 'Ali Azad and completing the work in 1194/1780. It has been published in three volumes by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, who have also published an English translation by Baini Prashad.

The period dealt with in the present volume, like that of earlier centuries, is not rich in Arabic or Persian literature of sailors, explorers, travellers and medieval geographies. The *Jazb al-qulub ila diyar al-mahbub* by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, begun at Medina in 998/1589-90 and completed at Delhi in 1001/1592-3, is only the history and topography of Medina. The work came to be treated as very valuable devotional literature, however, and won considerable admiration from the Shaikh's contemporaries and posterity. It has been published at Calcutta, Lucknow and Kanpur.

In 1002/1593-94 Amin bin Ahmad Razi, a first cousin of Nur Jahan's father, and Jahangir's prime minister *I'timadu'd-Daula* (Ghiyas Beg bin Muhammad Sharif) wrote the *Haft-iqlim* containing about 1560 biographies from the seven geographical regions of the world. It also gives the geographical details of the towns to which the celebrities dealt with by the author belonged. The work has recently been published in Iran and the MS. copies are numerous.

Nawwab Dargah Quli Khan Salar Jang (b. 1122/1710, d. 18 Jumada I 1180/22 Oct. 1766), who started his early career in the suite of Nawwab Nizamul-Mulk Asaf-Jah and was subsequently promoted to the governorship of Aurangabad, wrote an account of Delhi, its buildings, festivals, etc. and its contemporary shaikhs, poets, singers and dancers. The MSS. of this are entitled *Risala-i Salar Jang* or *Abadi-i Dihli*; the copy in the British Museum is dated either 1192/1778 or 1200/1786. An enlarged version of the work is the author's *Muraqqa'-i Dihli*, which has been published.

A more exhaustive work on Indian towns and their famous men is the *Hadiqat al-aqalim* by Murtaza Husain bin Allah-Yar 'Usmani Bilgrami (b. 1132/1719-20, d. c. 1795), who served under the Mughal governors of Gujarat, Awadh and Bengal and in 1190/1776 became an official under Captain Jonathan Scott, Persian Secretary to Warren Hastings. The author undertook the work at the request of Captain Scott, basing it mainly on the *Haft-iqlim* and incorporating into it a translation of the *Geography of Europe* by Scott. The account of the Indian towns and their social and political life is based on the author's personal knowledge. This large work was twice published at Lucknow in 1879 and 1881.

Historical works also contain short biographies of poets, 'ulama', physicians and sufis. The most valuable is the *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh* of Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir 'Qadiri' bin Muluk Shah bin Hamid Shah, who was born on 17 Rabi' II 947/21 Aug. 1540 at Toda Bhim in Jaipur. The



*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh* is divided into three volumes: the 1st volume deals with the history of India from the reign of Nasiru'd-Dawla Sebuktigin (366/977-387/997) to the end of Humayun's reign; the 2nd volume is devoted to Akbar's reign; and the 3rd volume deals with the biographies of those sufis, 'ulama', physicians and poets personally known to the author. Besides giving biographical details, the work is valuable as a contribution to the history of the religious movements of the time. All the three volumes have been published and translated into English. The 2nd volume, translated by W.H. Lowe, is inaccurate, but the 3rd volume translated by T.W. Haig is satisfactory.

The *Bahru'l-asrar fi manaqibu'l-akhyar*, a history of the Uzbek Khans of Transoxiana, specially the Astarkhani sultans from the accession of Din Muhammad Khan in 1006/1597-98 to 1050/1640-41 is valuable because of the contemporary account it gives of neighbouring countries. The author, Mahmud bin Amir Wali, travelled for many years from 1034/1624-5 onwards. He gives an account totally unknown elsewhere of the celebration of Muharram which he saw at Lahore; his description of the noblemen, 'ulama', qazis, sufis and poets of Transoxiana also throws light on their Indian contacts. The manuscript in the India Office Library was copied from the copy written by the author himself.

A list of other important historical works and useful literature throwing light on the history of sufism in India is given in the bibliography. The details of the dates and place of publications and the location of the MS. copies in different libraries mentioned above is also given in the bibliography.



## Chapter One

### An Outline of Ibn 'Arabi's Mystical Ideas

FROM the fourteenth century onwards there was a developing popularity of the mystical ideas of Ibn 'Arabi<sup>1</sup> (560/1165-638/1240). As discussed in volume one, this was mainly due to his talented disciples who wrote commentaries (in both prose and poetry) on the ideas contained in the Master's works, at the same time preaching incessantly on these themes to all sections of the Muslim community. Although India, Iran, Central Asia and Turkey were the principal centres of this movement, its impact was also felt intensely on the Arabic speaking world. The virtual identification of sufism with the beliefs of Ibn 'Arabi makes it imperative to outline the basic mystical concepts of the Spanish philosopher.<sup>2</sup>

Of Ibn 'Arabi's sufic works, the most important are the *Fusus al-hikam*<sup>3</sup> (Bezels of Wisdom) and the *Futuhāt al-Makkiyya* (The Book of Revelations Received in Mecca). The *Fusus al-hikam*, the epitome of sufi esoteric teaching was, according to Ibn 'Arabi, dictated to him by the Prophet Muhammad at Damascus in a dream in Muharram 627/Dec. 1229.<sup>4</sup> Its twenty-seven chapters are named after twenty-seven prophets

<sup>1</sup>S.A.A. Rizvi, *History of Sufism in India*, I, Delhi, 1978, pp. 103-8.

<sup>2</sup>The following works in English give an authoritative account of Ibn 'Arabi's mystical philosophy. (a) A.E. Affifi, *The mystical philosophy of Muhyid-Din Ibn ul-'Arabi*, Cambridge, 1939. (b) T. Izutsu, *A comparative study of the key philosophical concepts in Sufism and Taoism*, Tokyo, 1966. (c) Henry Corbin, *Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, translated from the French by Ralph Manheim, London, 1969. Other works in English and other European languages may be seen in the bibliography.

<sup>3</sup>The German translation of the work by Hans Kofler (Graz-Austria, 1970) is dependable. *The wisdom of the Prophets* by Khaja Khan (Madras, 1929) is a free English translation of the work. T. Burckhardt's French translation with notes is useful. *La sagesse des prophetes (Ibn 'Arabi)*, traduction et notes (Paris, 1955). The MS. read to and corrected by the author is in Istanbul (*Türk-Islam Eserleri Muzesi*, 1933). The edition of the work published in Cairo in 1365/1946 (pp. 47-228) by A.E. Affifi along with his introduction (pp. 1-43) and followed by a detailed searching commentary (pp. 1-384), is very popular. However it is likely to be replaced by the magnificent Cairo edition giving detailed critical apparatus edited by 'Usman Yahya. This is likely to be published in several volumes. The work is still in progress.

<sup>4</sup>*Fusus al-hikam*, Cairo, 1365/1946, p. 47.



from Adam to Muhammad,<sup>1</sup> and each chapter is a compendium of the mystic insights of the prophet after whom it is named.

The *Futuhāt al-Makkiyya* was started in 598/1202 in Mecca. There Ibn 'Arabi fell deeply in love with a girl called Nizam bint Makinu'd-Din, the daughter of his Iranian host. As Henry Corbin writes, Nizam 'was for Ibn 'Arabi what Beatrice was to be for Dante; she was and remained for him the earthly manifestation, the theophanic figure, of *Sophia aeterna*. It was to her that he owed his initiation into the *Fedeli d'amore*."<sup>2</sup> Another penetrating experience for Ibn 'Arabi during this period was his circumambulation of the Ka'ba, which sharpened his mystic sensitivity and made a deep impact on his writings. To quote Corbin again,

'These privileged theophanic moments cut across the continuity of profane, quantified and irreversible time, but their *tempus discretum* (the time of angelology) does not enter into that continuity. This must be borne in mind when we attempt to link the theophanies together, that of the young girl Sophia, for instance, with that of the mystic youth in the prologue of the *Futuhāt*. An encounter with theophanic persons always postulates a return to the "centre of the world" [the Ka'ba], because communication with the '*alam al-mithal*'<sup>3</sup> is possible only at the "centre of the world." Many other statements of our *shaikh* bear witness to this fact.'<sup>4</sup>

The six volumes of the *Futuhāt al-Makkiyya*, divided into some 560 chapters, were completed in c. 629/1231, and the manuscript copy of the second recension preserved in Istanbul is divided into thirty-seven volumes.<sup>5</sup> It is written in the author's own hand and is dated 633/1235-637/1239. According to the preface of the work the first volume was intended as a discussion of the doctrines of mysticism (*ma'arif*); the second of spiritual practices (*mu'amalat*), the third of the mystic states (*ahwal*), the fourth of the degrees or stages of mystic perfection (*manazil*),

<sup>1</sup>The prophets chosen are Adam, pp. 48-58, Seth, pp. 58-68, Noah, pp. 68-75, Idris, pp. 75-80, Abraham, pp. 80-84, Isaak, pp. 84-90, Ismael, pp. 90-94, Jacob, pp. 94-99, Joseph, pp. 99-106, Hud, pp. 106-115, Salih, pp. 115-119, Shu'aib, pp. 119-126, Lot, pp. 126-131, Ezra, pp. 131-138, Jesus, pp. 138-151, Solomon, pp. 151-160, David, pp. 160-167, Jonah, pp. 167-170, Job, pp. 170-175, John, pp. 175-177, Zacharias, pp. 177-181, Elias, pp. 181-187, Luqman, pp. 187-191, Asroa, pp. 191-197, Moses, pp. 197-213, Khalid ibn Sinan, pp. 213-214, Muhammad, pp. 214-226.

<sup>2</sup>*Creative imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, p. 52.

<sup>3</sup>Lit. 'the world of images', 'the world of analogies', 'the world of forms both psychic and corporeal.' It is 'ontologically an intermediate domain of contact between the purely sensible world and the purely spiritual, i.e., non-material world! As Professor Affi defines it (commentary of the *Fusus*, p. 74), it is 'a really existent world in which are found the forms of the things in a manner that stands between "fineness" and "coarseness," that is, between pure spirituality and pure materiality.' *The key philosophical concepts in Sufism and Taoism*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup>Corbin, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup>*Türk-Islam Eserleri Muzesi*, Istanbul, 1845-81.



the fifth of the consociations of the God-head and the soul (*munazalat*) and the sixth of the esoteric abodes (*maqamat*). Despite its astounding size Ibn 'Arabi asserted that he had confined himself to only a brief clarification of a small part of the fundamental principles on which his sufi method was based and had failed to exhaust any of the ideas or the doctrines of sufism.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi wrote a number of other prose treatises which incisively explained his mystical beliefs. One of them, entitled the *Insha' al-dawa'ir* is very significant.<sup>2</sup> His *Diwan*<sup>3</sup> (Collection of Poems) symbolically transmutes human love into divine love. The Collection of Ibn 'Arabi's love poems entitled the *Tarjuman al-ashwaq*<sup>4</sup> was preceded by two prefaces, the first stating that the poems were written out of love for Nizam and the second that they should be interpreted allegorically, the last comment obviously being intended to satisfy the orthodox moralists. Ibn 'Arabi wrote further commentaries both on the *Diwan* and the *Tarjuman al-ashwaq* in which he explained his use of such symbols as 'ruins, encampments, Magi, gardens, meadows, mansions, flowers, clouds, lightning flashes, zephyrs, hills, copses, paths, friends, idols, women who rise like suns,' allegorically reminding his readers,

'All the things I have just mentioned, or all the things that resemble them, are, if you understand them, mysteries, high and sublime illuminations which the Lord of the heavens sent to my heart, just as He sends them to the heart of anyone who possesses a quality of purity and of elevation analogous to the spiritual preparation that I myself possess. If you bear this in mind, you will prefer to lend faith to my sincerity. Remove from your thought the exterior of words, seek the interior (batin, the esoteric) until you understand.'<sup>5</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi also wrote a commentary on the *Fusus al-hikam* entitled the *Miftah al-Fusus*, but an indelible mark in the realm of sufi scholarship was left by his successors and admirers, who vied with one another in clarifying the complex ideas of the Master. Although Ibn 'Arabi had made a deep study of sufi literature and the works of such Muslim philosophers as Abu Nasr Muhammad al-Farabi (d. 339/950), and Ibn Sina (370/980-428/1037), and had had a personal association with his father's friend, Ibn Rushd (520/1126-595/1198), he claimed mystical intuition (*kashf*, literally, unveiling) to be the only source of all his writings.

<sup>1</sup>Corbin, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>Written between 598/1201 and 629/1231, the *Insha' al-dawa'ir* has been published by S. Nyberg in his *Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-'Arabi*, Leiden, 1919.

<sup>3</sup>The MSS. of the *Diwan* were made in the author's lifetime, Konya, Yusuf Agha, 5501, 5502, published Bulak 1271/1854-55.

<sup>4</sup>English translation of text and part of commentary, R.A. Nicholson, *The Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*, a collection of mystical odes, London, 1911.

<sup>5</sup>Corbin, p. 323.



To Ibn 'Arabi the Absolute or Absolute Reality (al-Haqq) in its primordial absoluteness was *ankar al-nakirat*) the most indeterminate of all indeterminates or the most unknown of all the unknown). It was absolute mystery (*ghaib mutlaq*), the abysmal darkness ('*ama*'),<sup>1</sup> and at the level of the undifferentiated oneness (*ahadiyya*) was not oneness (*wahidiyya*) of many. Thus Ibn 'Arabi explained *Ahad* (One or Unique) in a non-numerical sense, and identified the Absolute at this level with *Zat* (Essence) or *al-Wujud Mutlaq* (Absolute Being).<sup>2</sup> In Qur'anic terminology Absolute is designated by the term 'He' (*Huwa*).<sup>3</sup> Accordingly, Absolute in its primeval transcendence and absoluteness could not be the subject-matter of any discussion; what could be known was the self-revealing aspect of Absolute or the succession of *tajalliyat* (theophanies, literally, disclosing something hidden behind a veil). Although Ibn 'Arabi identified *tajalli* with *faiz* (emanation), a Plotinian term, he did not mean one thing overflowing from the Absolute One, then from that another, in a chain-like fashion. To Ibn 'Arabi the Absolute itself appeared, with a different self-determination in each instance.

The first *tajalli* or theophany is only the self-manifestation of the Absolute (Essence) or *Ahadiyya* within itself. The process of the revelation of the Absolute within itself under the forms of the Divine Names (*asma' Ilahiya*) is the second theophany; in other words, self-manifestation amounts to self-determination or self-delimitation (*ta'ayyun*, plural *ta'ayyunat*) of the Absolute. As Ibn 'Arabi asserts, 'He knows Himself by Himself . . . other-than-He cannot grasp Him.' Kashani enumerates the following strata (*maratib*) in the self-manifestation of the Absolute.

He begins by saying that there is in Being nothing except one single "essence" (*'ayn*) which is the Absolute, and its "reality" (*haqiqah*), which is Being in its phenomenal (*mashhud*) aspect. But, he adds, this phenomenal aspect of Being is not a one-stratum structure, but it comprises six major strata.

The first stratum: Being at this stage is still completely free from any limitation. This stratum represents the "reality" in its non-determination (*la-ta'ayyun*) and non-delimitation (*'adam inhisar*). In other words, there is as yet absolutely no self-manifestation occurring; Being is still the "essence" itself rather than a part of the phenomenal "reality." And yet it is capable of being considered a part of the phenomenal "reality" in the sense that it forms the starting-point of all the subsequent ontological stages. It is no longer the "essence" *per se* in its absolute Darkness.

The second stratum: Being is here "determined" in itself by a kind

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh 'Abd al-Razzaq Qashani (Kashani), *Sharh al-Qashani al Fusus al-Hikam*, Cairo, 1321/1904, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>*Fusus*, p. 121.



of all-comprehensive self-determination comprising all the active determinations pertaining to the Divine aspect of Being (i.e. the Divine Names) as well as all the passive determinations pertaining to the creaturely or phenomenal aspect of Being. The Absolute at this stage still remains One. The One is not yet actually split into multiplicity; yet there is observable a faint foreboding of self-splitting. The Absolute, in other words is *potentially* split.

The third stratum: this is the stage of Divine Unity (*al-ahadiyyah al-ilahiyyah*) or that of Allah, where all the active (*fa'iliy*) and effective (*mu'aththir*) self-determinations are in the state of unity.

The fourth stratum: this is the stage at which the Divine Unity (3rd stage) is split into independent self-determinations, i.e. the Divine Names.

The fifth stratum: this stage comprises in the form of unity all the self-determinations of a passive nature (*infi'aliy*). It represents the unity of the creaturely and possible things of the world of becoming.

The sixth stratum: here the unity of the preceding stage is dissolved into actually existent things and properties. This is the stage of the "world." All the genera, species, individuals, parts, accidents, relations etc., become actualized at this stage!<sup>1</sup>

✓ Ibn 'Arabi confidently challenged other sufi thinkers, in particular Ghazali<sup>2</sup> who claimed that God could be known without any reference to the world. Ibn 'Arabi asserted that 'the Essence in so far as it is qualified by the attribute of divinity (*uluhiyyah*) cannot be known except when there is the object to which it appears as God.'<sup>3</sup> He postulated a universal Being which might either be regarded as the Essence of phenomena or as the phenomena manifested by that Essence (*al-khalq*, Appearance, the World, the Many). The term 'not being' (*adam, nisti, nist*) is relatively non-existent: that is, the world existed as an idea in God's knowledge before the latent essence of things (*a'yan sabita*) was brought into actual and objective existence.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kashani, p. 239, English translation of the extract in *Izutsu*, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>HSI, pp. 64-66.

<sup>3</sup>Kashani, p. 54; *Izutsu*, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup>For instance Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi (b. 604/1207, d. 672/1273, see HSI, pp. 81-83) says:

"Thou didst show the delightfulness of Being unto not-being [after] thou hadst caused not-being to fall in love with thee.

Take not away the delightfulness of thy bounty; take not away thy dessert and wine and wine-cup!

And if thou take it away, who is there that will make inquiry? How should the picture strive with the painter?

Do not look on us, do not fix thy gaze on us: look on thine own kindness and generosity.

We were not, and there was no demand on our part, (yet) thy grace was hearkening to our unspoken prayer (and calling us into existence)."



At the level of self-determination of the Absolute the Unity, according to Ibn 'Arabi is the Unity of multiplicity (*ahadiyya al-kasra*). It is interpreted by varying Divine Names<sup>1</sup> which, previous to their existence in the outer world, were latent in the Absolute.<sup>2</sup> Despite their multiplicity and diversity, however, the Divine Names point to one single Reality.<sup>3</sup> For example, all Names such as *Rabb* (Lord), *Allah*, *Rahman* (Merciful) are only the particularized and determined forms of the Absolute.<sup>4</sup> However, to Ibn 'Arabi, Merciful epitomizes all Divine Names although there is no difference between other Names and the Name, Allah.<sup>5</sup> For example the *Qur'an* reminds us,

Say (unto mankind): Cry unto Allah, or cry unto the Beneficent, unto whichsoever ye cry (it is the same). His are the most beautiful names.<sup>6</sup>

As in the *Qur'an* and *Hadis*, God describes Himself in different ways, and Ibn 'Arabi argues that the Absolute, even in His self-revealing aspects, remains undefinable. In Him the *tanzih* (the affirmation of transcendence) and the *tashbih* (comparison or immanence) are harmoniously blended. For example the *Qur'anic* verse asserts *laysa ka-mithli-hi shay'* (Naught is as His likeness) followed by *wa huwa al-sami' al-basir* (He is the Hearer, the Seer).<sup>7</sup> According to Ibn 'Arabi, the first clause is indicative of the *tanzih* and the second relates to the *tashbih* aspect. The synthesis of the two aspects is compared to perceiving 'the One in the Many and Many in the One, or rather to see [seeing] the Many as One and the One as Many.'<sup>8</sup>

It was only the Prophet Muhammad and the *Qur'an*, says Ibn 'Arabi, that struck a real harmony and synthesis between the *tanzih* and the *tashbih*.<sup>9</sup> *Furqan*,<sup>10</sup> a *Qur'anic* term, he stated, represented an extreme

Before the painter and the brush the picture is helpless and bound like a child in the womb.

Before Omnipotence all the people of the (Divine) court of audience (the world) are as helpless as the (embroider's) fabric before the needle.

R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, II, translation of the first and second books, new series, London, 1960, p. 35, and VII commentary, London, 1936, pp. 56-57.

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 124-25.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 119.

<sup>5</sup>*Kashani*, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>*Qur'an*, XVII, 110.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, 11.

<sup>8</sup>*Izutsu*, p. 61.

<sup>9</sup>*Fusus*, p. 70.

<sup>10</sup>An infinitive noun from the root FRQ means the criteria of discriminating right from wrong; the following are illustrations from the *Qur'an*.

A. And when We gave unto Moses the Scripture and the Criterion (of right and wrong), that ye might be led aright (*Qur'an*, II, 53).



form of the *tanzih* as advocated by Noah in order to fight the idolatry prevalent in his community.<sup>1</sup> According to him the *Qur'an* implied the Furqan, however the Furqan did not imply the *Qur'an*.<sup>2</sup> Ibn 'Arabi asserted that the Prophet Muhammad did not summon men to God at the level of His He-ness (*Huwiyya*) or innermost Essence, but rather to God at the level of His Names.<sup>3</sup>

The first self-manifestation of the Absolute brought into being the permanent archetypes (*a'yan sabita*, plural, singular, *'ayn*) belonging to an ontological intermediate region between the Absolute's unknowable and self-revealing aspect. These were permanent (*sabit*), not in the sense of the external existence (*wujud*) but as realities eternally in the Divine consciousness. Ibn 'Arabi called them the third 'thing'; the first being the Absolute and the second the world. He says:

'The third thing' is neither qualified by existence nor by non-existence, neither by temporality nor by eternity (*a parte ante*). But it has always been with the Eternal from eternity. . . .

It is neither existent nor non-existent. . . . But it is the root (i.e. the ontological ground) of the world. . . . For from this third thing has the world come into being. Thus it is the very essential reality of all the realities of the world. It is a universal and intelligible reality subsisting in the Mind. It appears as eternal in the Eternal and as temporal in the temporal. So, if you say that this thing is the world, you are right. And if you say that it is the Absolute, the Eternal, you are equally right. But you are no less right if you say that it is neither the world nor the Absolute, but is something different from both. All these statements are true of this thing.

Thus it is the most general Universal comprising both temporality (*huduth*) and eternity (*qidam*). It multiplies itself with the multiplicity of the existent things. And yet it is not divided by the division of the existent things; it is divided by the division of the intelligibles. In short, it is neither existent nor non-existent. It is not the world, and yet it is the world. It is "other", and yet it is not "other."<sup>4</sup>

Insofar as the intermediate stage is identified with the Divine conscious-

B. *Qur'an* itself identified with Furqan. (i) He hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.

Aforetime, for a guidance to mankind; and hath revealed the Criterion (of right and wrong). Lo! those who disbelieve the revelations of Allah, theirs will be a heavy doom. Allah is Mighty, Able to Requite [the wrong]. *Qur'an*, III, 3-4.

(ii) Blessed is He Who hath revealed unto His slave the Criterion (of right and wrong), that he may be a warner to the peoples. *Qur'an*, XXV, 1.

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 70.

<sup>3</sup>*Kashani*, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup>*Izutsu*, pp. 152-53.



ness it is Divine, but its significance to the created world makes it creaturely or human. The very first form in which the Absolute begins manifesting itself by corresponding to the unified state of a permanent archetype is the Reality of Muhammad (*haqiqa al-Muhammadiyah*). This is the active principle upon which the existence of all archetypes depends and on which the creative activity of the self-revealing aspect of the Absolute operates. According to Ibn 'Arabi, each prophet is a logos of God, but Muhammad is *the* Logos or the leader of the prophets (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc.) who finally historically acquired human form. As *the* Logos, Muhammad in himself unites the Essence, the Attributes and the Names in his *fardiyya* (single nature). In Plotinian terminology, Muhammad as the first self-determination of the Absolute is the First Intellect. In a *Hadis* Muhammad says that the first thing which God created was his light. Ibn 'Arabi says,

He was the most perfect being of the human species. This is why the whole process of creation was commenced and finished through him. 'He was a prophet even while Adam was between water and clay' (as the cosmic Logos), but later (i.e. in historical time) he was born compounded of elements (i.e., in a bodily form) and proved to be the final seal of the prophets . . . (As an individual), Muhammad was the most appropriate symbol of his Lord, because he had been given all the "words" (*kalim*) which were the very contents of the names (of all the things of the world) which (the Lord taught) Adam.<sup>1</sup>

In Ibn 'Arabi's ontological world view, the creation was a process involving three different aspects (*salasiyya*). Firstly the Absolute in its self-revealing aspect or at the level of *fardiyya* (singleness) comes down to the level of Divinity (*Ilahiyya*). In the second place the self-consciousness of Divinity brings into existence archetypes from the state of non-existence. This process exemplifies the sufic tradition: 'I was a hidden Treasure and I yearned to be known. Then I created creatures in order to be known by them.' In accordance with Ibn 'Arabi's thought, Corbin translates the last portion of the above *Hadis*, 'in order to become in them the object of my knowledge.'<sup>2</sup> Ibn 'Arabi sees the situation as the Absolute wishing to see the essence (*a'yan*) of the Divine Names, i.e., it wishes to see its own inner essence (*'ayn*). Thus the Divine Unity on the level of Divine Names which stands in need of the world is the Unity of multiplicity (*Ahadiyya al-kasara*), and the Divine Unity on the level where it does not require the world or even the names is the Unity of the essence (*Ahadiyya al-'ayn*).<sup>3</sup> Then, in the third place, the breath of the Compassionate One (*Nafas al-Rahman*) or God through His Command

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, p. 214 in *Izutsu*, p. 230; *Qur'an*, II, 31.

<sup>2</sup>Corbin, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup>*Fusus*, p. 105.



(Be-Kun)<sup>1</sup> creates the world. Nothing, according to Ibn 'Arabi, could come into being without the co-ordination of the triplicity of the Essence, the Will and the Word (command). The triad of the Absolute is accompanied by a corresponding triplicity in the things created.<sup>2</sup> This consists of (1) thingness (*shay'iyya*), (2) hearing (*sama'*) and (3) obeying (*imtisal*), depending on the preparedness (*isti'dad*) of things created. The instantaneous obedience of things according to Ibn 'Arabi shows that these were already in existence as permanent archetypes. Although it is the ontological command of God which brings into being (*takwin*) in the realm of existence things from the realm of concealment, the role of things is not a totally passive one. The orthodox concept of *creatio ex nihilo* is modified by Ibn 'Arabi to the extent that *nihil* (non-existence) is *mumkin* (possible), in other words, something that has power to exist by having come into being as a Permanent archetype. This point, he explains by the analogy of the modeller in clay and the clay he uses. A superficial observer would perhaps believe that the modeller makes models according to his own sweet-will, while the clay plays a merely passive role. The real situation is that the range of models he can make is dependent on the nature of the clay. This indicates that the positive nature of things can play a positive role in creation.<sup>3</sup>

A novel aspect of Ibn 'Arabi's world-view is that of the ontological process of perpetual new creation (*al-khalq al-jadid*). At every single moment the world is being created anew and the process is eternal. Although man himself is not aware of it, he is in a perpetual process of ascending. At the level of the Absolute, the process means 'descent' (*nuzul*), first to the archetype and then to the 'possible.' The same phenomenon perceived from the level of the 'possible' is of ontological ascent. Kashani explains the phenomena this way:

One of the most miraculous things about man is that he is in a perpetual state of ascent with regard to all the (possible) modes of the "preparedness" of his own archetypal essence. For all the modes of the archetypes are things that have been known to God (from eternity), permanently fixed in potentiality, and God brings them out to actuality incessantly and perpetually. And so He goes on transforming the possibilities (*isti'dadat*, lit. "preparednesses") that are externally fixed but not yet actualized into possibilities

<sup>1</sup>*Kun fa-yakuna.*

A. The Originator of the heavens and the earth!  
When He decreeth a thing, He saith unto it only:  
Be! and it is. *Qur'an*, II, 117.

Lo! the likeness of Jesus with Allah is as the likeness of Adam. He created him of dust, then He said unto him: Be! and he is. *Qur'an*, III, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup>*Fusus*, pp. 115-16.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 116-17.



that are actualized . . . . Thus everything is in the state of ascending at this very moment because it is perpetually receiving the endlessly renewed ontological (*wujudīyya*) Divine self-manifestation, and at every self-manifestation the thing goes on increasing in its receptivity for another (i.e., the next) self-manifestation.

The man, however, may not be conscious of this because of his eyes being veiled, or rather because of the veil being extremely thin and fine. But he may also become conscious of it when the self-manifestations take on the forms of intellectual imaginative or mystical experience.<sup>1</sup>

The first thing created by God in order to see Himself was the universe, everything in it representing one particular aspect of His Names. However to epitomize the whole universe in one single entity He created 'man.' Seen at the cosmic level 'man' is a microcosm, but as the *kawn al-jamī* (comprehensive being) he is the *Imago Dei*, the vicegerent of God on earth, the macrocosm and the sole cause of the creation of the universe.<sup>2</sup> To use the analogy of the mirror, the universe is a clouded mirror while Man is the polishing of the mirror or rather the mirror itself which God constructed to make Himself visible to Himself. According to Kashani, before the creation of Man the universe existed because of the requirements of the Divine names each of which particularized an Attribute. No Name was able to unify all the Attributes together, which led to the creation of 'Man' to act as a comprehensive locus for manifesting all the aspects of existence in a unity (*ahadiyya*). The Presence of Divinity contains both the Essence and all the names; man comprises the properties

<sup>1</sup>Kashani, p. 152 in *Izutsu*, pp. 198-99.

<sup>2</sup>*Fusus*, pp. 48-49. Rumi says:

Therefore in form thou art the microcosm, therefore in reality thou art the macrocosm.

Externally the branch (the outward aspect) is the origin of the fruit; intrinsically the branch came into existence for the sake of the fruit.

If there had not been desire and hope of the fruit, how should the gardener have planted the root of the tree?

Therefore in reality the tree was born of the fruit, (even) if in appearance it (the fruit) was generated by the tree.

Hence Mustafa (Muhammad) said, "Adam and the (other) prophets are (following) behind me under [my] banner."

For this reason that master of (all) sorts of knowledge has uttered the allegorical saying, "We are the last and the foremost."

(That is to say), "If in appearance I am born of Adam, in reality I am the forefather of (every) forefather."

Since the worship of the angels was (rendered) to him for my sake, and he ascended to the Seventh Heaven on my account.

Therefore in reality the Father (Adam) was born of me, therefore in reality the tree was born of the fruit." R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi* (translation IV), Book III, p. 301.



both of 'necessity' and 'possibility.'<sup>1</sup>

'Man' as an individual person, however, is not endowed with a perfect 'comprehensiveness'; only 'Man' on the cosmic level is the epitome of the Divine names and attributes. Adam, whose creation the angels opposed, stood in the middle between the Absolute and the creatures representing the synthesis between the two.<sup>2</sup> Ibn 'Arabi reiterates the popular mystical thesis that the angels were not aware of what God meant by creating a 'vicegerent' on earth; nor did they know the essential service which Adam was destined to perform. They 'praised' and 'sanctified' the Divine names to the limited extent that they were manifested in themselves and not in the comprehensive form as represented by Adam. It was only through ignorance that the angels had protested. The Qur'an says:

And when thy Lord said unto the angels: Lo! I am about to place a viceroy in the earth, they said: Wilt Thou place therein one who will do harm therein and will shed blood, while we, we hymn Thy praise and sanctify Thee? He said: Surely I know that which ye know not. And He taught Adam all the names, then showed them to the angels, saying: Inform me of the names of these, if ye are truthful. They said: Be glorified! We have no knowledge saving that which Thou hast taught us. Lo! Thou, only Thou, art the Knower, the Wise. He said: O Adam! Inform them of their names, and when he had informed them of their names, He said: Did I not tell you that I know the secret of the heavens and the earth? And I know that which ye disclose and which ye hide. And when We said unto the angels: Prostrate yourselves before Adam, they fell prostrate, all save Iblis. He demurred through pride, and so became a disbeliever.<sup>3</sup>

Underlining the superiority of Man over the angels, Ibn 'Arabi asserted that the nature of angels was solely spiritual (*ruhiyya*) while the nature of 'Man' was spiritual-bodily (*ruhiyya-badaniyya*). Ibn 'Arabi further developed his thesis on the basis of the following verses in the Qur'an:

When thy Lord said unto the angels: lo! I am about to create a mortal out of mire,

And when I have fashioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down before him prostrate,

The angels fell down prostrate, every one.

Saving Iblis; he was scornful and became one of the disbelievers.

He said: O Iblis! What hindereth thee from falling prostrate before that which I have created with both My hands? Art thou too proud or art thou of the high exalted?

He said: I am better than him. Thou createdst me of fire, whilst him

<sup>1</sup>Kashani, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>Fusus, pp. 50-51.

<sup>3</sup>Qur'an, pp. 30-35.



Thou didst create of clay.

He said: Go forth from hence, for lo! thou art outcast,

And lo! My curse is on thee till the Day of Judgement.

He said: My Lord! Reprieve me till the day when they are raised.

He said: Lo! thou art of those reprieved

Until the day of the time appointed.

He said: Then, by Thy might, I surely will beguile them every one,

Save Thy single-minded slaves among them.

He said: The Truth is, and the Truth I speak,<sup>1</sup>

Laying special emphasis on the phrase 'created with both My hands,' Ibn 'Arabi asserts that all the Perfections of the Absolute permeate 'Man.' As an example, he quotes the case of Abraham (Ibrahim) who was known as *Khalil Allah* (God's friend). The principal reason for this title, says Ibn 'Arabi, is that Abraham embodied all the attributes qualifying the Divine Essence.<sup>2</sup>

After creating Adam, Ibn 'Arabi says, 'God made him behold all that He had put into him.'<sup>3</sup> According to Kashani, God enabled the Real Man (*al-insan al-haqiqi*) to observe all the Divine secrets, obliterating all differences between the Perfect Man and the Absolute.<sup>4</sup> Ibn 'Arabi reminds us that God in the Qur'an Himself says:

We shall show them Our portents on the horizons and within themselves until it will be manifest unto them that it is the Truth.<sup>5</sup>

This verse, according to Ibn 'Arabi, reiterates God's promise to show Himself in temporal things and asserts that names and attributes are manifested to 'Man' at the cosmic level.

However, Ibn 'Arabi recalls that although on a cosmic level man is the highest of all beings, on an individual level he tends to fall to the lowliest position. There he ignores that he should give unconditional obedience to the Divine command, and loses his 'servant-ness' (*'ubudiyya*), a mark of his superiority over the angels. The highest impediments to his progress, then, are reason (*'aql*) and 'ego' which totally deprive him of a realization of the self-manifestation of the Absolute. At an individual level, according to Ibn 'Arabi, minerals come to occupy the highest rank for they accept unquestioningly Divine power over themselves, without any veils at all. Higher than the minerals are the plants, which, however, are removed from the Absolute because in the process of growth they obey their own natural laws. Lower than plants are animals, whose activities are determined by their will (*irada*).<sup>6</sup> Ibn 'Arabi divides man into two categories:

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXXVIII, 72-85.

<sup>2</sup>*Fusus*, p. 81; *Kashani*, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup>*Fusus*, p. 56.

<sup>4</sup>*Kashani*, p. 26.

<sup>5</sup>*Qur'an*, XII, 53.

<sup>6</sup>Rumi says:

I died to the inorganic state and became endowed with growth, and (then) I died



the first consists of those who are swayed by their passions and carnal desires, who do not wish to proceed beyond the bounds of their reason and do not keep it within proper limits. Such men are 'servants of reasoning' and not 'servants of the Lord.' To the second category belong men of pure minds and hearts, devoid of animal passions. They try to know God through 'unveiling' and 'mystic intuition.'<sup>1</sup> The most perfect among them dispel reason and personal will (*irada*), thus exposing themselves directly to the Divine activity. In sufic terminology this amounts to dying to one's own self (*fana'*) and subsisting in God (*baqa'*). The mystic concentrates his physical and spiritual powers on God in such a way that his whole being is united with Him. He himself becomes the embodiment of *zikr*. Just as one and the same light passing through glasses of various colours is coloured in various ways, so the Absolute is manifested differently in men of varying capacities (*al-muthaqqiq bi al-Haqq*).<sup>2</sup> In the mystic the He-ness (*Huwiyya*) of the Divine is actualized 'He becomes Divine hearing with which He hears, Divine sight with which

to (vegetable) growth and attained to the animal.

I died from animality and became Adam (man): why, then, should I fear? When have I become less by dying?

At the next remove I shall die to man, that I may soar and lift up my head amongst the angels;

And I must escape even from (the state of) the angel: *everything is perishing except His Face*.

Once more I shall be sacrificed and die to the angel: I shall become that which enters not into the imagination.

Then I shall become non-existence: non-existence saith to me, (in tones loud) as an organ, *Verily, unto Him shall we return*.

Know death to be (the thing signified by) what the (Mohammedan) community are agreed upon, namely, that the Water of Life is hidden in the (Land of) Darkness.

Grow from this river-bank, like the water-lily, greedy and craving for death as the sufferer from dropsy.

The water is death to him, and (yet) he is seeking the water and drinking it—and God best knoweth the right course.

Oh, the cold lover, clad in the felt (garment) of shame, who from fear of (losing) his life is fleeing from the Beloved!

O thou disgrace (even) to women, behold hundreds of thousands of souls clapping their hands (and rushing) towards the sword of His love!

Thou hast seen the river: spill thy jug in the river: how should the water take flight from the river?

When the water in the jug goes into the river-water, it disappears in it, and it becomes the river.

His (the lover's) attributes have passed away, and his essence remains: after this, he does not dwindle or become ill-favoured.

I have hanged myself on His palm-tree in excuse for having fled from Him.

[R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'Din Rumi*, (translation IV), Book III, pp. 218-19].

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 107-56.



He sees, Divine hands with which He seizes and Divine foot with which He walks! Using the analogy of water to illustrate his thesis, Ibn 'Arabi asserts that everywhere the reality of water is the same but in various places it tastes different; in some places it is sweet, in some it is bitter but the taste does not alter its reality, likewise Perfect Man is also a man but is different from other human beings. He is one who knows himself and accordingly knows his Lord.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi recognizes the great role which the prophets (*nabi*) and apostles (*rasuls*) played in disseminating the religious law in their community and the world and in inviting people to obey God. The most perfect loci of the theopany on earth,<sup>2</sup> prophets and apostles were also vicegerents of God. The saints (*wali* plural *awliya*) obey the laws of their prophets but as Perfect Men they also occupy a high place in the spiritual hierarchy. An interesting difference between the prophets and saints, according to Ibn 'Arabi, is that '*wali*' is a name of God,<sup>3</sup> but He does not call Himself either *nabi* or *rasul*. On the basis of this Ibn 'Arabi argues that after the Prophet Muhammad the chain of prophethood came to an end, but the name *wali*, will remain until eternity and also in the hereafter.<sup>4</sup> He describes three successive stages of the development of a *wali*.

1. He 'annihilates his attributes in the Attributes of the Absolute' (*takhalluq*).
2. He 'annihilates his essence (*zat*) in the Essence of the Absolute' (*tahaqquq*).
3. He 'annihilates his actions in the actions of the Absolute.'

The last is known as *baqa* (self-subsistence) following the *fana*.<sup>5</sup> In this state the *wali* regains his self which he has once annihilated, but he regains it not in himself but in the midst of the Divine Essence. In his fully illumined consciousness there is no longer any trace of his old personal ego. Indeed he is the Perfect Man.<sup>5</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi rejects the notion of mystical union with God in the sense of becoming one with God; what he sees is the realization by the Perfect Man of the meaning of his essential unity with the Divine Being. To him Paradise is nothing but the Divine form hidden in the mystic's being. A tradition of the Prophet Muhammad reminds the Perfect Man, 'He who knows himself knows his Lord.' Corbin says:

The authentic mystic wisdom (*ma'rifa*) is that of the soul which knows *itself* as a theophany, an individual form in which are epiphanized the divine Attributes which it would be unable to know if it did not discover and apprehend them in itself. "When you have

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, pp. 168-69.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, II, 257, 'Allah is the *wali* of those who believe'.

<sup>4</sup>*Fusus*, p. 135.

<sup>5</sup>*Izutsu*, pp. 255-56.



entered into my Paradise, you have entered into yourself (into your "soul," *nafs*), and you know yourself with another knowledge, different from that which you had when you knew *your* Lord by the knowledge you had of yourself," for now you know Him, and it is through Him that you know yourself.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to the finite God of religion, Ibn 'Arabi asserts the importance of the limitless God of mysticism without inhibition. He says:

The believer praises the God who is in his form of belief and with whom he has connected himself. He praises none but himself, for his God is made by himself, and to praise the work is to praise the maker of it: its excellence or imperfection belongs to its maker. For this reason he blames the beliefs of others, which he would not do, if he were just. Beyond doubt, the worshipper of this particular God shows ignorance when he criticizes others on account of their beliefs. If he understood the saying of Junayd, "The colour of the water is the colour of the vessel containing it," he would not interfere with the beliefs of others, but would perceive God in every form and in every belief. He has opinion, not knowledge: therefore God said, "I am in My servant's opinion of Me," i.e., "I do not manifest Myself to him save in the form of his belief." God is absolute or restricted, as He pleases; and the God of religious belief is subject to limitations, for He is the God who is contained in the heart of His servant. But the Absolute God is not contained by any thing, for He is the being of all things and the being of Himself, and a thing is not said either to contain itself or not to contain itself.<sup>2</sup>

According to Ibn 'Arabi the ignorant strictly adhere to the Lord they have known through their particular religions (*i'tiqadat*). *He manifests Himself*. They refuse to recognize Him and are insolent towards Him.<sup>3</sup>

To Ibn 'Arabi the whole world consists of nothing but this or that particular self-manifestation of the Absolute. Hence all religions worshipping the Absolute in a limited or particular way are identical. He therefore fervently objects to people who strive to obtain the true knowledge of Reality by rejecting other religions as unbelief. For God Himself says, 'Unto Allah belong the East and the West, and whithersoever ye turn, there is Allah's countenance.'<sup>4</sup> Ibn 'Arabi interprets 'countenance of a thing' to mean its essence, and concludes that God forbids worshippers to be distracted by frivolous matters lest they die in a state of forgetfulness.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Corbin, p. 133.

<sup>2</sup>*Fusus*, summarized in R.A. Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic mysticism*, reprint, Cambridge, 1967, p. 159.

<sup>3</sup>*Fusus*, p. 113.

<sup>4</sup>*Qur'an*, II, 115.

<sup>5</sup>*Fusus*, p. 113.



By way of illustration, Ibn 'Arabi quotes the following verse from the Qur'an, 'Ye (Muslims) slew them not, but Allah slew them. And thou (Muhammad) threwest not when thou didst throw (arrows), but Allah threw, that He might test the believers by a fair test from Him.'<sup>1</sup> Ibn 'Arabi comments that although the real 'thrower' is God 'it is God in Muhammad's phenomenal form.'<sup>2</sup>

Consistent in his concept of 'God created in various religious beliefs; Ibn 'Arabi does not consider idol worship or polytheism objectionable insofar as the object of a man's worship is God Himself. Since everything in the world is one form or another of self-manifestation of the Absolute, idols representing different gods should also be considered special forms in which the Absolute manifests itself.<sup>3</sup> As long as the idol worshipper knows that he is adoring the manifested form of God and that he is not worshipping wood or stone, he can be blamed only for not synthesizing *tashbih* with *tanzih*, and not for being sinful. To Ibn 'Arabi, however, there is a higher and a lower attitude towards idolatry which should never be forgotten. He says:

The "knower" knows who (really) is the object of his worship; he knows also the particular form in which (the object of his worship) appears (to him). He is aware that the "dispersion" and "multiplicity" are comparable to the corporeal members in the sensible form (of man's body) and the non-corporeal faculties in the spiritual form (of man), so that in every object of worship what is worshipped is no other than God Himself. In contrast to this, the "lower" people are those who imagine a divine nature in every object of their worship. If it were not for this (wrong) imagination, nobody would worship stones and other similar things. This is why (God) said to men of this kind, "Name them (i.e. designate each object of your worship by its name!)" (XIII, 23). If they were really to name these objects they would have called them a stone, a tree, or a star, (because their idols were in fact stones, trees and stars). But if they had been asked, "Whom are you worshipping?" they would have replied "a god!" They would never have said, "God" or even "the god." The "higher" people, on the contrary, are not victims of this kind of deceitful imagination. (In the presence of each idol) they tell themselves, "This is a concrete form of theophany, and, as such, it deserves veneration", but they do not confine (theophany) to this single instance (i.e. they look upon everything as a particular form of theophany).<sup>4</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi had no misconceptions about the Prophet Muhammad's forbiddance of idol worship, but to him the Prophet was concerned with

<sup>1</sup>Qur'an, VIII, 17.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 70, 184.

<sup>3</sup>Fusus, p. 185.

<sup>4</sup>Izutsu, p. 55.



the common people's worship of form and ignorance of Reality. He, therefore, urged them to worship the One God whom they could not perceive in any concrete form but knew in a broad and general way. The Muslim opposition to idolatry, Ibn 'Arabi asserted, was a pious imitation of the Prophet's practices.<sup>1</sup> Not in the conventional language of later sufic poets but with real conviction, Ibn 'Arabi wrote in his *Diwan* :

O Marvel ! a garden among the flames . . .

My heart has become capable of all forms.

It is a meadow for gazelles and monastery for Christian monks,

A temple for idols and the pilgrim's ka'ba,

The Tables of the Law and the book of the Koran.

I profess the religion of Love, and whatever direction

Its steed may take, Love is my religion and my faith.<sup>2</sup>

Naturally Ibn 'Arabi's views on idolatry profoundly shocked orthodox Muslims. Likewise they were scandalized with his thesis about good and evil and obedience and disobedience. He asserted that good and bad were merely a matter of relative viewpoints, for example, the sweet fragrance of a rose was repulsive to the dung-beetle.<sup>3</sup> Obedience (*ta'a*) and disobedience also ultimately proved to be two aspects of one and the same thing.<sup>4</sup> According to Kashani the soul itself was a 'one and single reality,' but the same soul doing good or bad was a process of manifestation of two modes.<sup>5</sup>

Ibn 'Arabi also calls attention to the fact that every act and phenomenon obeys the Divine will (*mashi'a*). Some actions can be evil and violate the religious law but they cannot be against the Divine decree which enjoys supreme authority. As the Divine will is concerned only with the coming into being of the act, it is impossible that the act should not occur. In some cases the same act violates the religious law of certain communities and is considered disobedient and sinful, in accordance with the laws of that community.<sup>6</sup> But all creatures, he asserts, are destined ultimately to benefit by the Mercy of God that runs through all beings. Divine mercy, in Ibn 'Arabi's ontological worldview, is responsible for the creation of the universe and transcends good and evil.<sup>7</sup> His belief that everything is a self-manifestation of the Absolute aroused in him a firm conviction of the ultimate victory of good, and that the situation of 'going astray' was secondary. He believed that God shows 'the straight path' and reminds that the Qur'an states unconditionally:

Lo! I have put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Not an animal but He doth grasp it by the forelock! Lo! my Lord is on a straight path.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Fusus*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>*Fusus*, p. 221.

<sup>3</sup>*Kashani*, p. 261.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup>Corbin, p. 135.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 210.

<sup>6</sup>*Fusus*, pp. 165-67.

<sup>8</sup>*Qur'an*, XI, 56; *Fusus*, p. 106.



The problems of evil, sins, predestination, compulsion and free-will concerned Muslim thinkers as greatly as they did the philosophers and the thinkers of other religious communities. To Ibn 'Arabi and his followers the answer was consistently offered by their theory of the Unity of Being. Subsequent pages explain the situation as the Indian sufis saw it, but a befitting reconciliation between the two traditions by Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi clearly expresses Ibn 'Arabi's world-view. Rumi says:

"Yesterday an inquirer put a question to me, because he was fond of disputation.

He said: "This Prophet uttered the deep saying, 'To be satisfied with infidelity is an act of infidelity'; his words are (conclusive like) a seal.

Again, he said that the Moslem must be satisfied (acquiesce) in every ordainment, must be satisfied.

Is not infidelity and hypocrisy the ordainment of God? If I become satisfied with this (infidelity), 'twill be opposition (disobedience to God).

And if I am not satisfied, that too will be detrimental: between (these two alternatives), then what means (of escape) is there for me?"

I said to him "This infidelity is the thing ordained, it is not the ordainment; this infidelity is truly the effects of the ordainment.

Therefore know (distinguish), sire, the ordainment from the thing ordained, so that thy difficulty may be removed at once.

I acquiesce in infidelity in that respect that it is the ordainment (of God), not in this respect that it is our contentiousness and wickedness.

In respect of the ordainment, infidelity indeed is not infidelity. Do not call God 'infidel,' do not stand here.

Infidelity is ignorance, and the ordainment of infidelity is knowledge: how, pray, should *hilm* (forbearance) and *khilm* (anger) both be one (and the same)?

The ugliness of the script is not the ugliness of the artist; nay, 'tis an exhibition of the ugly by him.

The power (skill) of the artist is that he can make both the ugly and the beautiful."

If I develop the investigation of this (subject) methodically, so that question and answer become lengthy.

The savour of Love's mystery will go from me, and form of piety will be deformed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, (translation IV) Book III, pp. 76-77.



## Chapter Two

### The Qadiriyyas

As we have described in Volume I the Qadiriyya order, founded by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani (b. 470/1077-78, d. 561/1166, also known as the *Ghausu'l-A'zam*), was one of the oldest of all mystical orders.<sup>1</sup> In India, however, it gained a footing only at the end of the fourteenth and during the fifteenth centuries. It was due to this late introduction that Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni was prompted to place it halfway in significance between the Suhrawardiyya and Chishtiyya orders.<sup>2</sup>

To all intents and purposes, the Qadiriyyas advocated the deification of their founder and all his descendants, both of the blood and spiritually. To some extent this developed from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's saying, 'My foot is on the neck of every saint of God,'<sup>3</sup> which his followers interpreted as implying the superiority of the Qadiriyya order. Legends about Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir in both India and Indonesia ascribe to him numerous and incredible miracles, whose execution was assisted by both angels and genii, obedient to his every command. The unshakable faith in these stories of all Qadiriyyas led to their order being tainted with an aura of gullibility. Nothing was impossible for Qadiriyya *pirs* and their credulous disciples allowed their own intellectual faculties to be retarded by an unrealistic vision of their spirituality.

As a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (through his daughter, Fatima), Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir was believed to have inherited every one of his ancestor's spiritual achievements. Due to such a pure Saiyid origin, mystics of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's order developed a tradition of obsessive respect for all those claiming to be Saiyids. They believed them to be immaculate beings who, with their children, deserved the most servile deference.

The initiation of Ibn 'Arabi into the Qadiriyya order had made all Qadiriyyas staunch supporters of his controversial *Wahdat al-Wujud*

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 84-85.

<sup>2</sup>'Abdu'l-Qadir 'Qadiri' b. Muluk Shah b. Hamid Bada'uni, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, Calcutta, 1864-69, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, *Akhbaru'l-okhyar*, Delhi 1332/1914, p. 10.



philosophy. It had also produced in them a great source of pride that such a famous sufi could be numbered among them.

### *The Qadiriyyas in the Deccan*

The Qadiriyya order was introduced into the Indian sub-continent by Mir Nuru'llah bin Shah Khalilu'llah, a grandson of Shah Nuru'd-Din Muhammad Ni'matu'llah (Wali) bin 'Abdu'llah. The latter, well-known for his copious sufi writings in both prose and poetry,<sup>1</sup> was born in Aleppo, Syria, in 730/1330. After the death of his *pir*, ('Abdu'llah al-Yafi'i, 697/1298-768/1367), a member of the Madyaniyya<sup>2</sup> order of Egyptian and African sufis, Shah Nuru'd-Din travelled through northern Iran, Samarqand, Herat and Yazd, finally settling in Mahan in the Kirman province of Iran. Soon he was to become the town's great mystic celebrity, founding the Ni'matullahi order of the later Shi'i sufis. His descendants in India could therefore trace their spiritual genealogy directly back to the Qadiriyyas because of the Shah's intimate relations with the Qadiriyyas of Iran.

The circumstances surrounding the devotion shown by the Bahmanid Sultan, Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad I (825/1422-839/1436), to Shah Ni'matu'llah as depicted by Firishta in the *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, are mythical. He claimed that the Sultan, who had shown great respect to many sufi saints, was so influenced by the fame of Shah Ni'matu'llah that he sent Shaikh Habibu'llah Junaidi (a disciple of the Shah's family in his service) to Kirman. Bearing expensive gifts the disciple's task was to secure a promise of prayers from the Shah for the Sultan's welfare. In reciprocation the Shah despatched a box to the Sultan containing an emerald crown of twelve *tark*.<sup>3</sup> The messenger, Mulla Qutbu'd-Din Kirmani, one of the Shah's followers, reminded the Sultan of a dream he had had while fighting against his brother, Taju'd-Din Firuz (1397-1422). In it a dervish (whom he believed to be the Mulla) had handed him just such a crown. The Mulla confirmed that the Shah in fact had kept the crown until the same day as the Sultan's dream had occurred. Moreover, he related how on the Shah's orders he himself had appeared before the Sultan in the dream. The Sultan agreed that the crown was identical to the one he had seen in his dream.

According to Firishta's version of the story, as Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali

<sup>1</sup>E.G. Browne, *Literary history of Persia*, III, reprinted, Cambridge, 1964, pp. 463-73, 'Abdu'l-'Aziz bin Sher Malik, *Manaqib-i hazrat Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali*, British Museum MS., Rieu II, 833a.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 404-5.

<sup>3</sup>*Tark* means renunciation or the abandonment of the world; it also means fold of a turban or a cap. The folds in the sufi cap have symbolic meanings. The twelve folds in the cap or the crown sent to the sultan symbolized the affiliation with twelve Isna 'Ashariyya Shi'i imams; and did not necessarily mean that the Sultan intended to embrace Shi'ism.



in his accompanying letter had addressed the Sultan as 'Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad Shah Wali', the ruler had ordered all future *khutbas*<sup>1</sup> and *farmans*<sup>2</sup> to contain this title in order to commemorate such a fantastic event.<sup>3</sup> Obviously this story is mythical and it is much more likely that the account of the Sultan's devotion to Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali outlined in the *Burhan-i Ma'asir* of Saiyid 'Ali bin 'Azizu'llah Tabataba, is the more correct one. In it the author asserts that the Sultan's lack of faith in the spirituality of contemporary Deccani sufis<sup>4</sup> had forced him to approach Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali, whose sanctity and miraculous power had made him somewhat prominent in the area. Moreover in the first year of his reign the Sultan had sent Shaikh Khujan, a disciple of the Shah's family at his court, to Kirman and the Shah had initiated the Sultan in absentia. The Shah also reciprocated with a sufi robe and cap.<sup>5</sup>

As this version would seem more accurate than Firishta's, one can probably assume that the Sultan and his followers would have wished to spread the belief that the blessings of Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali had helped in the defeat of his brother, Taju'd-Din Firuz.

Soon after transferring his capital from Gulbarga to Bidar in 827/1424, Sultan Ahmad I urged the Shah to despatch to his court one of his own sons for company and spiritual guidance. The Shah so loved Khalilu'llah, his only son, that he refused to part with him and his grandson, Mir Nuru'llah (the son of Shah Khalilu'llah), was sent instead.<sup>6</sup> The Mir was feted by a royal welcome, and a new town, close to Bidar, was built and called Ni'matabad in his honour. According to Firishta the Mir was also given the title, *Maliku'l-Masha'ikh*, as well as official precedence over all other sufis in the Deccan, most notably, of course, the descendants of

<sup>1</sup>The orations delivered on Fridays at the time of *zuhr* or meridian prayer, and on two Islamic festivals, 'Idu'l-Fitr and 'Idu'l-Azha. Technically left to the discretion of the *khatib* (the reciter of the *khutba*), a traditional *khutba* contained prayers for the Prophet Muhammad, his Companions and the ruler.

<sup>2</sup>The Royal mandate.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Qasim Hindu-Shah Astarabadi, *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi* or *Tarikh-i Firishta*, maqala III, rawza, I, Lucknow, n.d., p. 328.

<sup>4</sup>H.K. Sherwani's account of Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad's devotion to Gisu Daraz does not appear to have been based on the *Burhan-i ma'asir* (Delhi, 1936), p. 54. He says: 'Ahmad was destined to experience two entirely distinct feelings, one of relief at the death of Firoz and one of shock at the death of his preceptor and supporter Hazrat Gesu Daraz. In fact, his [Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad's] decision to change the capital to Bidar may have been partly the result of Hazrat's death. The history of the last three-quarters of a century at Gulbarga was one of intrigues, murders and faithlessness and with the Saint's death Ahmad must have felt singularly lonely and begun to think hard how to extricate himself from the intrigue-laden atmosphere of the capital.' H.K. Sherwani and P.M. Joshi eds, *History of medieval Deccan (1295-1724)*, I, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, 1973, p. 164; *HSI*, pp. 252-53.

<sup>5</sup>'Ali b. 'Azizu'llah Tabataba (Tabababa'i), *Burhan-i ma'asir*, Hyderabad 1355/1936, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 65.



Gisu Daraz.<sup>1</sup>

The stream of honours for the Shah and his family continued unabated. Sultan Ahmad I even married his daughter to Mir Nuru'llah. After Shah Ni'matu'llah's death at Mahan in 834/1430-31, Shah Khalilu'llah joined his son in the Deccan, accompanied by his other sons, Shah Habibu'llah Ghazi and Shah Muhibbu'llah. Another royal princess<sup>2</sup> was given in marriage to Shah Habibu'llah, and the Sultan's grand-daughter became the wife of Shah Muhibbu'llah. Shah Khalilu'llah attended the coronation of the Sultan's successor, 'Ala'u'd-Din Abu'l-Muzaffar Ahmad Shah II, in 839/1436.<sup>3</sup> According to Firishta some sources mention that Shah Khalilu'llah retired to Mahan, while others assert he died in the Deccan.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless his sons remained in the Deccan where under the Bahmanid Sultans they continued to enjoy considerable power and prestige. However at the end of the reign of Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din Humayun (862/1458-865/1461) Shah Habibu'llah was executed by the Sultan because of his opposition to the monarch's cruelty and the political support he had extended to Prince Hasan Khan<sup>5</sup> Shah Muhibu'llah died some time after 900/1494-95 in the reign of Sultan Shihabu'd-Din Mahmud<sup>6</sup> (887/1482-924/1518).

The presence of Shah Ni'matu'llah Wali's sons and grandsons in the Bahmanid Sultanate during the Bidar period not only reduced the influence of the followers of Gisu-Daraz but also strengthened Irani elements in the culture of the Deccan which reached a peak during the tenure of Khwaja Jahan Mahmud Gawan, an Irani who was Prime Minister between 1463 and 1481. The political influence of the Ni'matu'llahi sufis, in conjunction with that of Mahmud Gawan, considerably prepared the ground for the conversion of the Deccan Sultans to Shi'ism.

#### *The Qadiriyyas in Sindh, the Panjab and Kashmir*

In the second half of the fifteenth century a Qadiriyya *khanqah* was established at Uch near Multan. Its founder, Shaikh Muhammad al-Husaini al-Jilani was also a direct descendant of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir. His genealogical tree as given by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq is reproduced below.

Saiyid (Shaikh) Muhammad b. Saiyid Shah Amir b. Saiyid 'Ali b. Saiyid Mas'ud b. Saiyid Ahmad b. Saiyid Safiu'd-Din b. Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>*Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 329.

<sup>2</sup>She was the daughter of the heir-apparent, 'Ala'u'd-Din who ruled as 'Ala'u'd-Din Ahmad II from 839/1436 to 862/1458. *Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 329; *Burhan-i ma'asir*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup>*Burhan-i ma'asir*, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulshan-i Ibrahimi*, p. 329.

<sup>5</sup>*Burhan-i ma'asir*, p. 94.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 153-55.



Saifu'd-Din 'Abdu'l-Wahhab b. Muhi'u'd-Din Abi Muhammad 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani (Ghausu'l-A'zam).<sup>1</sup>

A native of Turkey, Shaikh Muhammad al-Husaini travelled to Khurasan, then Multan and Uch, in a grand tour of the Islamic world. Deciding to stay in Uch he returned to his homeland to collect his family, returning also with a large retinue of followers. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq there was a dearth of spiritual talent in Multan and naturally the Shaikh and his followers were warmly welcomed by the Multani ruler and the Uch élite.

Although Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq fails to mention the date of the Shaikh's final emigration he does note that his son and successor, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir (also known as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani, the second) died on 18 Rabi'I 940/7 October 1533 aged seventy-eight. He also states that his mother was the daughter of Shaikh Abu'l-Fath, a descendant of Saiyid Safiu'd-Din Kaziruni, the founder of the earliest known sufi *khanqah* in Uch.<sup>2</sup> If Shaikh Muhammad had married 'Abdu'l-Qadir's mother in 861/1456 he would therefore not have migrated to Uch any earlier.

Shaikh Muhammad al-Husaini was also a poet who used the pen-name, Qadiri. A selection of eight of his verses quoted by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq indicates that he used traditional sufi similes such as qalandar, the wine-bottle, the wine-cup and exuberance.

Shaikh Muhammad was survived by three sons. Of these Saiyid 'Abdu'llah was also a poet and it has been said that Maulana Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami (817/1414-898/1492) sent his own verses to him for comment.<sup>3</sup> Saiyid Mubarak Haqqani, the second son, was a retired ascetic. In a fit of ecstasy he withdrew into the Lakhi jungle in the Panjab where he remained a lonely hermit for many years, allowing himself only the company of Shaikh Ma'ruf Chishti, a descendant of the revered Baba Farid of Ajodhan. After his death in 956/1549-50 he was buried in his father's tomb at Uch.<sup>4</sup>

The new leader of the Qadiriyyas at Uch was Shaikh Muhammad's eldest son, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani. While a young man 'Abdu'l-Qadir was obsessed with music and travelling. On his journeys, much to the disgust of his orthodox father, he would take camels loaded up with musical instruments. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir was not unlike a number of other successful sufis whose early lives had been filled with an appreciation of worldly delights and who had then suddenly undergone a conversion to mysticism. His hagiographer relates the story. While hunting in the forest 'Abdu'l-Qadir heard strange and disturbing cries

<sup>1</sup> *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 205; *HSI*, pp. 111-12.

<sup>3</sup> *AA*, p. 202.

<sup>4</sup> Mufti Muhammad Ghulam Sarwar, *Khazintu'l-as fiya'*, I, Lucknow, 1873-74, p. 123.



from a partridge. At the same time a wandering dervish came to him telling him that soon he too would cry in anguish at his separation from God. Suddenly 'Abdu'l-Qadir experienced an aversion to anything connected with the world. Later he renounced his official post as well as his beloved music and replaced them with a new, intensely mystical illumination and love of the Divine.

The Langah ruler of Multan was incensed by 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani's sudden resignation from the government. Moreover the Shaikh returned all *farmans* of grants and stipends he had received to the Sultan, brusquely informing him they should be given to someone else. His independence had a somewhat predictable result and for several years the Shaikh was beset by the privations associated with an erratic income. Finally the Sultan relented, apologized to the Shaikh and invited him to court. However the Shaikh declined, on the pretext that he could not disturb his ascetic life.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq credits Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir with a multitude of miracles. The most significant power attributed to him was the curing of diseases, in the same way as the first Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. When a plague struck Multan, those who ate grass where Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani performed his daily ablutions were instantly cured. It was also commonly believed that the Prophet had appeared to the Shaikh and his disciples.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, too, the supernatural elements attached to legends of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani (the founder) must have greatly contributed towards firmly establishing the Qadiriyya order in Sind and the Panjab. According to Dara-Shukoh, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir converted a large number of Hindus to Islam, as well as causing many wayward Muslims to adopt a pious life.<sup>2</sup>

In 940/1533 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani was succeeded by his eldest son, Shaikh 'Abdur-Razzaq, who however held the post briefly, dying on 5 Jumada II 942/1 December 1535.<sup>3</sup> His place was assumed by his son, Shaikh Hamid, who had been trained by his grandfather, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani. A great favourite with all the Muslim population in Uch, he was showered with gifts and grants which he apparently enjoyed disposing of. Early in Akbar's reign, the Sadru's-Sudur, Shaikh Gada'i Kamboh,<sup>4</sup> succeeded in having the Shaikh summoned to Agra from Uch. Angered at this, the Shaikh cursed both Shaikh Goda'i and his patron, Bairam Khan. At the end of March 1560 Bairam Khan fell from power and Shaikh Gada'i was disgraced with him. Many sufis and holy men ascribed their sudden fall to being cursed by Shaikh Hamid. After his

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 204-5.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Dara-Shukoh, *Safinatu'l-auliya'*, Lucknow, 1872, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>AA, pp. 205-6.

<sup>4</sup>S.A.A. Rizvi, *Religious and intellectual history of the Muslims in Akbar's reign*, Delhi, 1975, pp. 53-54, 83, 168, 233.



return to Multan, Shaikh Hamid died on 19 Zu'lqā'da 978/14 April 1571. He was buried in Hamidpur, a village of Multan.<sup>1</sup>

Each of Shaikh Hamid's two sons, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir, and Shaikh Musa, had ambitions of becoming their father's *khalifa*. For several years the succession question remained unresolved. Finally the dispute was taken to the court by the two brothers for Akbar's decision. Shaikh Musa's political foresight gave him the edge over his brother and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir retired to live as an ascetic in Uch. Moreover one evening in Fathpur-Sikri, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir had annoyed Akbar by declaring that it was unlawful to consume either poppy seeds or their oil, and on another occasion (also at Fathpur-Sikri), after performing congregational prayers the Shaikh began his own supererogatory prayers in the Audience Hall (*Diwan Khana*). When ordered by the Emperor to conduct these prayers in his own quarters, the Shaikh answered pertly that in the realm of prayer the Emperor's decrees were irrelevant. Greatly annoyed, the Emperor dubbed him 'ignorant' and demanded he leave the empire. The Shaikh stormed from the hall and immediately resigned his *madad-i ma'ash*.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir then immersed himself in a gruelling round of meditation and austerity. In reality, however, his departure had been prompted more by resentment at his brother's success at court than by his own religious puritanism. The Emperor had had a legitimate objection to the Shaikh's behaviour, as the great mosque at Fathpur-Sikri or the Shaikh's own apartments would have been more suitable for supererogatory prayers and one must conclude that the Shaikh had goaded the Emperor into banishing him from a court in which he felt inferior to his rival brother.

The succession controversy continued however. In Uch and Multan Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir was recognized as his father's successor. In Delhi and at Akbar's court scholars and sufis honoured Shaikh Musa in this role and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, a disciple of Shaikh Musa, also describes his *pir* as Shaikh Hamid's successor.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Musa's life at court was fruitful as he was a loyal supporter of Akbar and a friend to the two powerful countries, Faizi and Abu'l-Fazl.<sup>4</sup> Early in February 1602 the Langah rebels, headed by Mahmud Langah and his son Nahar Khan, attacked Shaikh Musa Qadiri at Uch and killed him. The obituary by Abu'l-Fazl included these lines.

Shaikh Musa Qadiri was among the class of turban wearers ('*ulama*') who led the life of a *khanqah* dweller. Discipleship (*muridi*)<sup>5</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 91; *AA*, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 91-92.

<sup>3</sup>*AA*, pp. 206-7.

<sup>4</sup>*RIM*, pp. 183, 185, 291, 331.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 394-417.



Emperor enabled him to achieve the rank of an *amir*.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the successors and disciples of Shaikh Hamid, the most outstanding was Shaikh Dawud, who came from Chati in the Mughal province of Lahore. His ancestors were Arabs; Shaikh Dawud himself had been born at Sitpur in Multan. His father died before his birth, his mother soon afterwards. The child's upbringing was entrusted to Miyan Rahmatu'llah, Dawud's elder brother. Later he was to study under eminent scholars in Uch, Multan and Lahore.

Passionately devoted to sufism, Shaikh Dawud was constantly in a state of ecstasy and was to be found wandering deliriously through Ajodhan (Pak-Pattan), in the nearby desert of Dipalpur and the remote, unpopulated region of Shergarh, close to Jheni. After the expiry of 20 years in this state he was suddenly inspired through a dream of the Ghausu'l-A'zam to seek Shaikh Hamid Qadiri as his *pir* and to adopt the sedentary life of a *khanqah*.

During the reign of Islam Shah Sur (952/1545-960/1552) the Makhdumu'l-Mulk, Mulla 'Abdu'llah Sultanpuri, the controller of all religious affairs, summoned Shaikh Dawud to the Sultan's camp at Gwalior. There he demanded an explanation of the rumour that the Shaikh's disciples periodically invoked the name, Dawud. The Shaikh answered that in fact his disciples repeated the words, 'Oh *Wadud*, (Loving), one of the 99 names of God. The Makhdumu'l-Mulk was suitably convinced with this reply.

Once or twice annually Shaikh Dawud would distribute the gifts he had accumulated, retaining for himself only an earthen pot and a remnant of ancient bed-matting. On the birth and death anniversaries of Ghausu'l-A'zam some hundred thousand people would assemble near his Shergarh *khanqah* to share in these gifts.<sup>2</sup>

After hearing first-hand information of the Shaikh's fame, from dervishes travelling in the Panjab, some time about 981/1573-74 Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni visited the Shaikh at Shergarh. These are some of his impressions.

Few days passed on which Hindus, to the number of fifty or a hundred, more or less (on each day), did not come with their families and kindred to pay their respects to that holy man, receiving the high honour of conversion to Islam, and obtaining instruction in the faith. I found the gates and walls and trees and dwellings of that delectable town filled with the sound of the telling of rosaries and the reciting of God's praises, and the *Shaikh* bestowed on me his auspicious cap, saying, "Be thou my deputy to thine own people, for (thus to appoint a deputy) is my wont" . . . . I represented, through Miyan 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, one of

<sup>1</sup>Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami, *Akbarnama*, III, Calcutta, 1886, p. 802.

<sup>2</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 29-35; *AA*, p. 207.



the Shaikh's sincere companions, (to whom is applicable the text) "Blessedness awaiteth them and a goodly home",<sup>1</sup> that a report was current among the holy men of Hindustan that the time for the rising of a religious leader was at hand, that most of that body, (i.e., the holy men) concurred in fixing on one of the Sayyids of that country, whose ancestors had formerly been seated on the throne of empire in Dihli and Badaon for some time,<sup>2</sup> that they were engaged in making preparations for a holy war and in collecting arms, that they professed to have received directions from the holy Ghaus-i A'zam (may God be pleased with him!) to engage in this affair, and that they had implicated with themselves some of the *Amirs* on the frontier and that some of them professed to have received supernatural encouragement during their assemblies and when they were in difficulties, and purposed to bring the object of their desire to an issue. The *Shaikh* asked me, "What is that *Sayyid's* mode of life, and condition?". I said "He is a man who lives a retired life, in holy poverty, conformably to the sacred law, a recluse and an ascetic who has resigned himself to God, passing most of his days among the tombs (of holy men) and his nights in his cell in worship and submission to God, but he is a man of good family, unrivalled and incomparable in his knowledge of the military art, of excellent moral character and following a most worthy mode of life." The *Shaikh* said, "The members of that body (i.e., the holy men) are no true *darvishes*, in that they so traduce the holy Ghaus, and do him violence now that he can no longer help himself, and those spiritual encouragements and signs are all part of the delusions of Satan, for how could the holy Ghaus (may God be pleased with him!) countenance such matters as this, he whose rule it always was that the people should expel the love of the world from their hearts, and, in all candour and sincerity, should set their faces towards the love of God, the Most High, abandoning vain desires and lusts, and not that one should turn aside from the path of worship, asceticism and holy endeavour to fall again into the net of the world, which is the enemy of God? Say to that *Sayyid* from me, "May God the Most High vouchsafe to you grace to stand fast in the path which you hold. If the least suspicion of any desire for evanescent delights remains (in your heart), it behoves you to strive to overcome it, and not to be beguiled by the impostures and misrepresentations of a bewildered band of know-nothings, thereby straying from the path. Though the lover of the world should attain to kingship,—the supreme object of worldly men, and the seeker after the (sensual) joys of paradise should reach the rewards bestowed by the Everlasting God, that is, the maidens and mansions of the next world, and the lover of God should die of grief from the utter hopelessness of attaining his object,

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XIII, 28.

<sup>2</sup>Saiyid Sultan 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Alam Shah (849/1445-855/1451).



yet is the disappointment of this last a thousand-fold better and more happy than the fruition and attainment of desire experienced by the former two classes of poor-spirited men.<sup>1</sup>

Although the number of Hindus mentioned by Bada'uni as converted by Shaikh Dawud is palpably exaggerated there seems little doubt that the miracles attributed to him prompted a number of Hindus, as well as some members of tribes close to the newly settled town of Shergarh, to embrace Islam. In 981/1573-74 Emperor Akbar sent Shahbaz Khan Kamboh,<sup>2</sup> an orthodox Sunni, to invite the Shaikh to his court. The Shaikh refused however, arguing that his secret prayers for the Emperor were sufficient for his spiritual welfare. Shaikh Dawud died in 982/1574-75 and was buried in Shergarh. Although Bada'uni incorrectly attributed to him the founding of the Qadiriyya<sup>3</sup> order in India, it was the impact of Shaikh Dawud's personality and his individual spiritual achievements that swept Qadiriyya influence from the Panjab to Delhi and Agra.

Shaikh Dawud's successor was his nephew and son-in-law, Shaikh Abu'l-Ma'ali (b. 961/1553-54). Having a good literary and religious background, the Shaikh began writing poetry under the name of Ghurbati. In his verses he was wont to pun on his *pir's* name. Here is an example,

How can this frozen heart be warmed by the speech of all?

Nay, it requires the breath of Dawud,<sup>4</sup> which can soften even iron.<sup>5</sup>  
And again he played with the word 'Dawud' in these verses,  
I sit on the throne of poverty, now that I have attained my desire,  
I reign like Sulaiman (Solomon), for I am heart and soul the slave of Dawud.

\* \* \* \*

And although I be not worthy of this high fortune,  
Grant to me one atom of the love of Shaikh Dawud.

Of the ecstatically mystical verses of Shaikh Abu'l-Ma'ali quoted by Bada'uni these are worth noting,

'Ghurbati' speaks in his religious ecstasy,

An ecstasy which is indeed altercation without speech.

It were impossible to describe the condition of his love,

Yet to refrain from doing so is another impossibility.

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<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 35-36; English translation by Wolseley Haig, III, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, Calcutta, 1925, pp. 57-60.

<sup>2</sup>*RIM*, pp. 186-87.

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<sup>4</sup>Dawud (David), according to Islamic tradition, was a king of Israel and a prophet, to whom God revealed the *Zubur*, or Book of Psalms. According to the Qur'an God taught Dawud the art of making coats of mail (XXI, 80) and among his miracles was the ability to convert iron into wax.

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<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 35-36; English translation by Wolseley Haig, III, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, Calcutta, 1925, pp. 57-60.

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<sup>3</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 38-39; *AA*, pp. 207; *Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 193.

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<sup>5</sup>W. Haig, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 153.



'Ghurbati'! Make thy life a sacrifice to Him,  
For the felicity of union with Him is not bestowed as a worthless gift.

\* \* \* \*

Keep the mention of love in thine heart, and open not thy lips,  
Keep the mouth of this flask well closed, lest (cold) air should enter it

\* \* \* \*

Ghurbati! Raise the cry of 'I am God' (Ana'l-Haqq) and fear not the  
stake,  
For rope and stake are the means of ascent in this path.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \*

That which we have seen and known of that Soul of Souls (We learnt)  
not to repeat, but to see and to know.<sup>2</sup>

On 16 Rabi' I 1024/15 April 1615 Shaikh Abu'l-Ma'ali died and was buried in Lahore.<sup>3</sup> Among his devotees and admirers the most prominent was the famous Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, the author of the *Akhbaru'l-Akhyar*.

Another of the leading disciples of Shaikh Dawud was Shaikh Abu Ishaq Qadiri. He also lived in Lahore and like his *pir* was a very popular Qadiri sufi. He died on 5 Muharram 985/25 March 1577 and his burial place was the central point around which a cluster of tombs of his descendants was later built.<sup>4</sup> Of Abu Ishaq Qadiri's disciples, Shah Shamsu'd-Din Qadiri of Lahore was the most significant and Emperor Jahangir is said to have had great faith in his miraculous powers.<sup>5</sup>

Other early Qadiri sufis of the Panjab included Saiyid Isma'il Gilani, whose father, Saiyid 'Abdu'llah Rabbani was also his *pir*. Akbar is said to have presented him with 1,000 bighas<sup>6</sup> of land in Firuzpur, and the merchants of Lahore were among his greatest followers. Nevertheless the Saiyid never allowed his devotees to disturb his strict routine of meditation and ascetic practices. Both he and his father died in the same year, 978/1570-71.<sup>7</sup>

Other prominent figures were Shaikh Bahlul Darya'i<sup>8</sup> (d. 983/1575-76) and his disciple Shaikh Husain Lahori. Husain's great grandfather, Kalas Rai had been converted to Islam during Sultan Firuz Shah Tughluq's reign (752/1351-790/1388), and his father, Shaikh 'Usman, was a weaver. His *pir*, Shaikh Bahlul Darya's, took him as a disciple to Lahore

<sup>1</sup>Reference to Hallaj, *HSI*, pp. 56-58.

<sup>2</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 153-56.

<sup>3</sup>*Safinatu'l-aulyas*, pp. 195-96.

<sup>4</sup>*Khazinatu'l-asfiya*, I, pp. 132-33.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 184.

<sup>6</sup>A Mughal *bigha* was approximately five-eighths of an acre.

<sup>7</sup>*Khazinatu'l-asfiya*, I, p. 127.

<sup>8</sup>*ibid*, pp. 131-32.



when he was a child of ten. When Shaikh Bahlul retired to his village of Chaniot, Shaikh Husain became a hardy mendicant.

For twenty years Shaikh Husain roamed the jungles around Lahore, retiring at night to the tomb of Shaikh Hujwiri Data Ganj Bakhsh.<sup>1</sup> Later he became a *malamati*<sup>2</sup> wandering the streets of Lahore inebriated, singing and dancing and he was challenged by the Makhdumu'l-Mulk about this riotous behaviour. Reminding the Makhdumu'l-Mulk of the five fundamental duties of Muslims, the Shaikh told the Makhdumu'l-Mulk that one of these (*kalima*) was honoured by them both. While the second and third duties were ignored by him,<sup>3</sup> they were observed by the Makhdumu'l-Mulk. But the fourth and fifth duties (the payment of *zakat* and the performance of the *hajj*) were bypassed by the Makhdumu'l-Mulk. Therefore, said the Shaikh, he himself was not alone in being a sinner.<sup>4</sup>

During his lifetime Shaikh Husain Lahori enrolled a legion of disciples who became Qadiri ambassadors in all parts of the Panjab as well as elsewhere in India. He died in 1008/1599 in Lahore.<sup>5</sup>

After Shaikh Husain's death his favourite disciple, known as Shaikh Madho succeeded him as head of his *khanqah*. As a youth Madho and been an exceedingly handsome Brahman with whom the Shaikh had been in love. Husain first saw him while outriding and he fell instantly under the intoxication of a mystic trance. Moving to the Shahadra quarter in Lahore where Madho lived, the Shaikh spent every night circumambulating his house and during the day following him everywhere like a household slave. For some years Madho ignored him. Finally he deigned to visit the Shaikh, later moving into his house. Eventually Madho embraced Islam. Madho's association with Hinduism prompted Husain to enjoy such Hindu festivals as Holi and Basant, when he danced and sang, joining in the ritualistic throwing of coloured powder. Until the end of the nineteenth century an orgy of colour on the days of Holi was the main feature of the *urs*<sup>6</sup> celebrations at the Lahore tomb of Shaikh Husain.<sup>7</sup>

Although Madho (d. 1056/1646-47) was succeeded by Shaikh Rang Balau'l, it was the latter's disciple, Hajji 'Abdu'l-Jamil (d. 1082/1671-72) who achieved prominence in Lahore. There the Hajji built a dome over

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 111-13.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 42, 150.

<sup>3</sup>Profession of Unity of God (profession of *Tawhid*) and a belief in the fact that Muhammad was the last of the prophets (profession of Nabuwwa) were observed both by the Shaikh and by the Makhdumu'l-Mulk, but the Shaikh ignored the five obligatory prayer times and the fasting. Makhdumu'l-Mulk, although he performed his prayers and fasted, did not pay *zakat* and avoided going on pilgrimage.

<sup>4</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 145.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, I, pp. 141-46.

<sup>6</sup>Anniversary of the death of a Sufi.

<sup>7</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 166-68.



the Prophet Muhammad's footprint which his ancestors had brought from Hejaz.<sup>1</sup>

Saiyid Shah Bala'ul bin Saiyid 'Usman bin Saiyid 'Isa Qadiri, a disciple of Saiyid Shamsu'd-Din Qadiri of Lahore, was also a prominent sufi of the Panjab. The Saiyid's ancestors were migrants from Herat (now in Afghanistan) who accompanied Humayun to India and settled in a village called Shaikhupura about 20 miles from Lahore. The *khanqah* he established soon became popular as a refuge where large numbers of people received their food daily. The Shah adhered to a strict routine. From dawn to breakfast he devoted his time to prayer and meditation. Then until noon he would distribute food among the poor. After an hour's siesta he said midday (*zuhr*) prayers, before attending to the spiritual need of his disciples. Meanwhile a large number of people would gather around his *khanqah* carrying cups of water to be blessed for the sick. The Shah would recite some prayers and exhale. Later two secretaries would write letters from him to the influential recommending the deserving. After *'asr* (afternoon) prayers he would meditate and perform *zikr*. During the evening a little water would be taken to break his fast and then he would follow *maghrib* (evening) prayers. Back in his cell more supererogatory prayers would be performed and he would supervise a further distribution of food, taking a little barley bread and spinach. After performing *'isha* (dusk prayers) he would again retire to his cell and by the time of *tahajjud* (prayers before sleep) he had finished the Qur'an three times. After the Shah's death in 1046/1636-37 he was buried outside the Delhi gate on the banks of the Ravi. Some time later due to flooding, the remains were removed to an unknown grave.<sup>2</sup>

Another Qadiriyya branch in the Panjab flourished through the efforts of a grandson of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani (the second).<sup>3</sup> He was Saiyid Muhammad Ghaus Bala Pir (d. 959/1551-52), the son of Saiyid Zainu'l-'Abidin, (himself a son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Sani). While travelling, Zainu'l-'Abidin had been murdered by robbers at Nagaur and the young Muhammad Ghaus was brought up and educated by his grandfather. He first settled in Uch but later migrated to Satghara in the Panjab.<sup>4</sup> Saiyid Muhammad Ghaus Bala Pir's son and successor, Saiyid Jiwan, was given the prestigious title of Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Qadir Salis (the third) in recognition of his piety and asceticism. After his father's death he moved extensively throughout India before settling in Lahore where he founded a quarter called Rasulpura. He died in 1022/1613-14.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 176-77.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 161-63.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>4</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, p. 124.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 148-49.



The Saiyid fathered two sons, 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and Muhammad, as well as two daughters. The former's son, Saiyid 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Chiragh Lahori was born during his grandfather's lifetime, and he became an eminent scholar and sufi. His grandfather prophesied that Saiyid 'Abdu'r-Razzaq would be the lamp (*chiragh*) of the family and so he became known by that name. During his lifetime the Chiragh was highly respected by Emperor Shahjahan. He died in 1068/1657-58 in Lahore and was buried near the tombs of his father and grandfather.<sup>1</sup>

The successors of Shah Ma'ruf Chishti-Qadiri (d. 987/1579-80),<sup>2</sup> a descendant of Baba Farid, who were also Qadiriyyas, enjoyed considerable following in the Panjab. Shah Ma'ruf's successor, Shah Sulaiman, was the son of a villager in Bhilluwal near Lahore. Once, when Sulaiman was a child, Shah Ma'ruf Chishti called on his father. The young Sulaiman was deeply impressed by the Shah's mystical gifts and while still a youth became his disciple. Shah Sulaiman mixed freely with Muslim shoemakers and other groups considered to belong to lowly professions, although technically not low in Islamic brotherhood. As a result, the snobbish Muslim Chaudhris considered the Shah unworthy of attention, until his miraculous powers reportedly changed their prejudiced attitude. The Shah died in 1065/1654-5 and was buried in his home village.<sup>3</sup>

The most outstanding *khalifa* of Shah Sulaiman was a disciple, Shaikh Hajji Muhammad Qadiri, who was better known as Naushah Ganj Bakhsh (d. 1064/1654).<sup>4</sup> His successors were known as Naushahiyyas and until modern times their founder enjoyed the most intense devotion and respect of the villagers around Lahore, the original centre of Naushahiyya activity. Naushah Ganj Bakhsh himself came from the Islamicized Khukhar tribe in the Panjab.<sup>5</sup> His father, Hajji 'Ala'u'-Din, was an ascetic who was reported to have made seven pilgrimages to Mecca, that presumably being a traditional number. At seventeen Naushah renounced the world and began living in the jungles. Although pressure from his parents brought him back to his village where he was persuaded to marry, he remained an ascetic. For six years his main pursuits were meditating by the banks of the river Ravi and reciting the Qur'an in the mosque of the neighbouring village of Naushahra. After this period he moved to Bhilluwal to become the disciple of Shah Sulaiman.

One story about Shaikh Naushah involved some village *zamindars* of

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya*, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 133-34.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 170-71.

<sup>4</sup>Muhammad Iqbal Mujaddidi in the *Intikhab-i ganj-i sharif*, edited by Saiyid Sharafat Naushahi, Lahore, 1975, pp. 15-17.

<sup>5</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya*, I, p. 181. Ghulam Sarwar's authority is the *Tazkira-i Naushahi*, but Muhammad Iqbal, on the authority of Saiyid Gul Muhammad, traces the genealogy of Shaikh Naushah from 'Ali (*Intikhab-i ganj-i sharif*), Lahore, 1975, pp. 15-16.



Suhanpal who had complained that their agricultural produce was poor but that the government had fixed its *jama'* (revenue) at an outrageous two thousand rupees, the figure of nine hundred being more reasonable. The Shaikh promised that he would help their cause. After that sum had been fixed by the Lahore governor the dishonest Chaudhri asked the villagers for Rs. 1,000, however the Shaikh told him that he knew by miraculous means that his prayers for a reduction in taxes were granted and the Chaudhri reluctantly admitted that he had been lying.

*Faqirs* and impoverished travellers who stayed in the mosque were also personally cared for by the Shaikh. Carrying his own food he would do the rounds of the village begging from door to door. Afterwards all food gathered, including his own, would be given away.<sup>1</sup> Some of the many sons and grandsons of Shaikh Naushah were sufis. Their descendants, who chose various villages around Lahore for their spiritual and meditational activities, proved a source of great strength to Muslims during the military and political upheavals and turmoil in the Panjab in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This also applied to other disciples of Shaikh Naushah who were scattered throughout the Panjab and as far as Kabul. The most eminent was Khwaja Muhammad Fuzail Naushahi, a native of Kabul, who had served the Mughal government and resigned from public service to become more deeply involved in mysticism. The Shaikh gave Khwaja Muhammad Fuzail the necessary sufi training before advising him to move to Kabul. There his failure to observe obligatory prayers resulted in a confrontation with the 'ulama', who however, were never quite successful in reforming him. He seems to have died in either 1111/1699-1700 or 1112/1700-1701.<sup>2</sup>

As a youth Shaikh Muhammad Taqi Qadiri (d. 1133/1720-21) entered the discipleship of Shaikh Naushah and became his faithful servant. On one occasion of the '*id-i qurban* (festival of sacrifice), having intended the slaughter of a number of lambs, the Shaikh fell into an ecstatic state and was about to cut his own throat in a gesture of sacrifice of his carnal self<sup>3</sup> but was prevailed upon not to do so.

A disciple of Shaikh Naushah who also from a tender age served the Shaikh with great devotion and obtained perfection under his guidance was Shaikh Pir Muhammad. Impressed by the spiritual heights he achieved his *pir* dubbed him *Sachyar* (Truthful). Pir Muhammad lived most of his life in the village of Nawshahra Mughlan, about twelve miles east of Gujarat, on the river Chanab.<sup>4</sup> Qazi Ruknu'd-Din Naushahi another disciple was a qazi in Wazirabad and a famed theologian whose mystical inclinations had prompted him to renounce his post.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 179-83.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 193-94.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 186-87.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 201-02.



Among the disciples of Shaikh Naushah, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Pak Naushahi became such a prominent mystic and ascetic that his *pir* sent him his own disciples and some of his sons for guidance. During his days as a sufi disciple, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman was assigned to deliver bread from the *khanqah* to the peasants. Pursuing hard ascetic exercises, he would habitually practice the arduous *chilla-i ma'kus*,<sup>1</sup> in which the body was suspended upside down by a rope, often in a well, the mendicant remaining in this position all night. He also adopted the habit of digging a grave then completely covering his whole body with earth while totally absorbed in prayer. He was also a passionate devotee of *sama'*. By the time Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman succeeded his *pir* he was famous for his miraculous cures of the sick. People from distant places would come to his *khanqah* for cures. After his death in 1153/1740-41 the Shaikh was buried in a village later known as Bihrhi 'Abdu'r-Rahman (the tomb of 'Abdu'r-Rahman).<sup>2</sup>

The towns of Pa'il and Kaithal, near Sirhind, became the centres of the Qadiriyya *Silsila*, mainly through the influence of Shaikh Kamal, a spiritual descendant of Shaikh Fuzail of Baghdad<sup>3</sup> and ultimately also of the Ghausu'l-A'zam. Shaikh Kamal does not seem to have been traditionally initiated by a *pir* and was an *Uwaisi*.<sup>4</sup> Passionately fond of travelling, during his peregrinations in Thaneswar he met Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's father Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad,<sup>5</sup> and invited him to visit Pa'il. They became great friends and Shaikh Kamal often visited Shaikh 'Abdul-Ahad with his family at Sirhind. Shaikh Kamal, however, was basically a *malamati* and *majzub*<sup>6</sup> who rarely attended congregational prayers, and was known to pelt curious sight-seers witnessing his supernatural feats with stones. Nevertheless he was able to discuss subtle mystical problems in some depth and with authority. He died in Jumada II 981/Sept.-Oct. 1573, aged over eighty and was buried at Kaithal, near Sirhind.

Shaikh Kamal was succeeded by his grandson, Shaikh Sikandar (d. 1023/1614-15): Both Shaikh Kamal and Shaikh Sikandar strengthened Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad's interest in the Qadiriyyas although he had already obtained initiation into the Chishtiyya order.<sup>7</sup>

With Uch and Lahore as bases, branches of the Qadiriyya order were founded in Kashmir. One of the early founders in that region was Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>HSI, p. 140.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatu'l-asfiya'*, I, pp. 202-3.

<sup>3</sup>Not to be confused with Fuzayl bin Iyaz, HSI, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup>Sufis who were not initiated by a particular *pir*. HSI, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup>MRMI, pp. 205-6.

<sup>6</sup>Ecstatic who ignored social and religious laws. *infra*, appendix A.

<sup>7</sup>Muhammad Hashim, *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, Kanpur, 1890, pp. 104-08.



Ahmad Qadiri, a descendant of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ahmad was widely travelled and had made the lengthy trip to Mecca before settling in Lahore. There he was initiated into the Qadiriyya order by Shaikh Muhammad. Impressed by his piety and asceticism, Baba Dawud Khaki<sup>2</sup> (who is mentioned below) invited him to settle in Kashmir. Shaikh Ahmad blessed Ghazi Shah Chak<sup>3</sup> (1561-63) before he ascended the throne and the successful Ghazi returned the favour by offering generous gifts to the Shaikh. He, however, chose to become a secluded ascetic after warning the Sultan that he would leave Kashmir if any more gifts were offered. He died in Srinagar and is buried in the Qutbu'd-Din Pura.

Shaikh Ahmad's friend, Shaikh Baba Dawud Khaki, was an influential citizen of Kashmir and also a disciple of Shaikh Hamza,<sup>4</sup> a distinguished Suhrawardiyya leader of Kashmir. A scholar and a poet, he wrote biographies of various Kashmiri sufis. Shaikh Baba Dawud made frequent journeys to Multan to visit the tombs of Suhrawardiyya saints but ultimately, under the influence of Shaikh Ahmad, he became a Qadiriyya. However like his former *pir* Shaikh Hamza he always remained hostile to the Shi'is. The untimely execution of a Sunni leader, Qazi Musa, by the Shi'i Sultan, Ya'qub Shah Chak (1586-88) alienated Baba from the Shi'i ruler of Kashmir and he deserted to the Mughal Emperor, Akbar who at the time was busily planning to annex Kashmir.<sup>5</sup> Upon his return to Kashmir with the Mughal forces in 1586, Baba died of dysentery.<sup>6</sup>

Hajji Musa, the son of Shaikh Ahmad Qadiri, was an ascetic who often sought seclusion in the jungles of Kashmir and the Panjab. His fame increased after he reportedly repulsed an elephant single-handed at Lahore; and the people of Kashmir, greatly impressed by this legend, flocked to see and hear him.<sup>7</sup>

Baba Dawud's disciple, Mir Nazuk, a Suhrawardiyya and a Qadiriyya, was a puritan who was fiercely opposed to *sama'*. In his enthusiastic piety he even refused to eat the fruit from his luxuriant gardens, fearing that his servants might not have paid adequate *kharaj*<sup>8</sup> and *'ushr*<sup>9</sup> taxes. He

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 191-94.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 11, 299; *infra*, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>HSI, p. 299.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, pp. 11, 290, 298-300.

<sup>5</sup>RIH, pp. 189-90, 457; HSI, pp. 298-99.

<sup>6</sup>Khawaja Muhammad A'zam Didamari, *Waqi'at-i Kashmir or Tarikh-i A'zami*, Lahore 1303/1886, pp. 108-9.

<sup>7</sup>ibid, pp. 122-23.

<sup>8</sup>Tax on landed property as distinct from *jizya* (a poll tax on all male adults of *ahl al-zimma* or the category of protected subjects who were able to fight).

<sup>9</sup>The properties of the Arabs in Arabia and the conquered countries were subject to the payment of a tax called *'ushr* or tithe. Subsequently *'ushr* was levied exclusively on Muslim property reserved for charitable purposes. Even the early Muslim converts of



remained a recluse, disallowing visitors. He died at Srinagar in 1022/1613-14.<sup>1</sup> After his son and successor Mir Yusuf Qadiri also died,<sup>2</sup> the responsibility for guiding the Qadiriyya *khanqah* of Mir Nazuk fell to Mir Muhammad 'Ali Qadiri, the youngest son of Mir Nazuk. During his lifetime a great crisis occurred in local Qadiriyya branches as a result of the popularity of Dara-Shukoh's *pir*, Mulla Shah, who spent his summers in Srinagar. Mir Muhammad 'Ali's own success on the local level managed to counteract some of this influence. The *zikh-i jahr*<sup>3</sup> (loud *zikh*) performed by either the Mir or his followers, which observers found particularly compelling, was perhaps the main reason for Mir Muhammad 'Ali Qadiri's favour with the people of Srinagar.

During the governorship of 'Ali Mardan Khan between 1061/1651 and 1068/1657 building activities in Kashmir's capital entered a golden era. A large number of gardens were planted, and roads, houses and fountains constructed. This brilliant regime however also witnessed severe famine. The starving population, led by a Kashmiri, Hajji Bam, burnt alive the Governor's Hindu *Peshkar* (secretary). Shahjahan was greatly disturbed and summoned a number of eminent Kashmiri Muslims to Delhi to investigate the incident. Among them was Mir Muhammad 'Ali Qadiri, who on his way to Delhi visited Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum,<sup>4</sup> the son of the Mujaddid, in Sirhind. The two, who were both dissatisfied with the administration of Shahjahan and Dara-Shukoh, became friendly. No action was taken, however, against the dignitaries of Kashmir, and Mir Muhammad 'Ali returned to Srinagar with renewed prestige. The Mir died in 1070/1659-60 and his successors enthusiastically continued the success of the Qadiriyya order in Kashmir.<sup>5</sup>

Khwaja Hasan and Khwaja Ishaq, two Kashmiri brothers, were also initiated as Qadiris by Shaikh Ahmad Qadiri, having previously been disciples of Shaikh Hamza. It was believed that Khwaja Hasan was directly blessed by the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad. He lived in a village near Zaingiri where he was also buried. For some time Khwaja Ishaq lived as a *qalandar*<sup>6</sup> but later he moved permanently to Mecca and Medina, and was buried in Medina.<sup>7</sup>

Iran were required to pay *kharaj* (the land tax) which was levied on them in pre-Islamic Iran. Early 'Abbasid jurists such as Abu Yusuf (113/731-182/798), Abu 'Ubayd, Qudama, Khatib and Yahya, use *ushr*, *jizya* and *kharaj* as synonyms. A Ben Shemesh, *Taxation in Islam*, I, Leiden, 1965, p. 6.

<sup>1</sup> *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, pp. 126-27.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, pp. 128-29.

<sup>3</sup> *infra*, pp. 114-25.

<sup>4</sup> This form of *zikh* is performed loudly either by a lone sufi or in company with others. It is opposed to *zikh-i khafi*, which is performed mentally only.

<sup>5</sup> *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, pp. 141, 163.

<sup>6</sup> *HSI*, pp. 300-9.

<sup>7</sup> *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, pp. 121-22.



During the reign of Shahjahan, Shah Ni'matu'llah Qadiri migrated from the Panjab to Kashmir. There he initiated Hajji Baba Qadiri who was a member of the Katju merchant community of Kashmir. When Shah Ni'matu'llah left, Hajji Baba, then sixty years of age, embarked on a pilgrimage. After spending some time in Medina he returned to Kashmir where he died in 1066/1655-56. Hajji Baba's son, 'Usman Qadiri, who was also known as Baba, succeeded his father and was a well-loved ascetic.<sup>1</sup>

Another distinguished immigrant to Kashmir was Shah Muhammad Fazil (d. 1117/1705) a descendant of the Ghausu'l-A'zam. He reached Kashmir about 1090/1679-80. During his lifetime he supported about a hundred people including family members, servants and assorted visitors. However, any gifts would be immediately disposed of either for the benefit of the poor or of travellers and nothing was saved for his family's future use.<sup>2</sup>

During the sixteenth century the mountains of Siwistan, in Sindh, were the home of a Qadiriyya hermit, Shaikh Khizr Siwistani Qadiri. Preferring nature to people, he loved the company of wild animals. According to legend he consumed leaves and wore nothing other than a loin-cloth.<sup>3</sup>

#### *The Qadiriyyas in Gujarat and Malwa*

Like a number of centres in the Panjab, the Gujarati Qadiriyya order was established by a sufi who was a descendant of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. Saiyid Jamal Pathri traced his lineage back to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, a son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. His father, Saiyid Husain, migrated from Iran to the Deccan and settled in Pathri near Ahmadnagar. In response to an invitation given by Sultan Bahadur Shah (932/1526-943/1537) of Gujarat, Saiyid Jamal settled in Ahmadabad in a *khanqah* built for him by the Sultan. After the death of Saiyid Jamal in 971/1564, his son, Saiyid Yatimu'llah, succeeded to the leadership of the *khanqah* previously run by his father.<sup>4</sup>

Other descendants of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani who settled in Gujarat included Saiyid Ghiyasu'd-Din and the father of Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, also known as Shahji. Both were killed in a local war and were buried at Saraswati, Ahmadabad. Saiyid 'Abdu'l Jalil, the son of Saiyid Ghiyasu'd-Din and his descendants all enjoyed considerable respect in the Gujarat region.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 201-2.

<sup>3</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 27-28.

<sup>4</sup>Muhammad Ghausi bin Hasan Shattari, *Gulzar-i Abrar*, (Tashkent MS. f. 133a, Mirza Muhammad Hasan, 'Ali Muhammad Khan Bahadur, *Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, Baroda, 1930, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup>*Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, p. 63.



A famous sixteenth century Qadiriyya in Gujarat was Mir Saiyid 'Abdu's-Samad Khuda-Numa. He earned the title *Khuda-Numa* (Guide to God) because he was believed to have possessed miraculous ability to lead others of God. Saiyid 'Abdu's-Samad was the disciple of another *Khuda-Numa* of Burhanpur, Shah Husain. Saiyid 'Abdu's-Samad lived the life of an ascetic close to the Sabarmati, inspiring a similarly deep asceticism among his disciples.<sup>1</sup>

One of the earliest Qadiriyyas to settle in Mandu was Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din. Originally a Shattariyya, he wrote a treatise on the discipline of that order which will be discussed in the next chapter. Later he became a Qadiriyya under a saint in Mecca. He died in 921/1515-16.<sup>2</sup>

Qazi 'Abdu'l-Qadir (d. 1011/1602-03) was a *khalifa* of Shah 'Abdu'r-Razaq Jhanjhana and a nephew and disciple of Shaikh Amanu'llah, who is discussed more fully later.<sup>3</sup> In his youth he travelled extensively and visited Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. After returning to India he retired to Ujjain, before settling in Sarangpur. From time to time he would accept the invitation of local officers to become a *qazi* but then invariably he would resign.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Qadiriyyas in Delhi and Agra Regions*

Attempts to establish the Qadiriyya order in the Delhi region had begun in the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (894/1489-923/1517) who invited Shaikh Abu'l-Fath bin Jamalu'd-Din Makki 'Abbasi Qadiri to settle in Agra. The Shaikh, from Shirwan,<sup>5</sup> came to be known as Makki (of Mecca) because of a long stay he made in that revered town. He is said to have inherited the *khirqā* of the Ghausu'l-A'zam from one of the great Qadiri's descendants.

Shaikh Abu'l-Fath led an independent life sheltered from the intrigues surrounding the Sultan and his nobles. Nevertheless a number of nobles managed to forge a letter ostensibly in the Shaikh's handwriting criticizing the Sultan which they then sent to the latter; however the Shaikh managed to foil the plan. During the remainder of the Sultan's reign and that of Ibrahim Lodi (923/1517-932/1526), there seem to have been no problems for the Shaikh. When Sultan Ibrahim Lodi set out from Delhi to repel the invasion of the Emperor Babur he took with him many eminent sufis and 'alims, including Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi<sup>6</sup> and Shaikh Abu'l Fath. However, Shaikh Abu'l-Fath deserted and fled back to Agra,

<sup>1</sup>Mulla Nizamu'd-Din Muhammad Sihalawi, *Malfuz-i Razaqi*, Lucknow, 1896/1905, pp. 8-9, 22, 25.

<sup>2</sup>AA, pp. 198-200.

<sup>3</sup>*infra*, pp. 78-80.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS. 261b, Manchester MS. f. 295a.

<sup>5</sup>A province along the Caspian with the famous port called Darband.

<sup>6</sup>HSI, pp. 345-46.



where he lived until his death in Sha'ban 953/Sept.-Oct. 1546.<sup>1</sup>

In the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, Saiyid Shah Muhammad Firuzabadi who claimed direct descent from Ghausu'l-A'zam, migrated from the Deccan to Agra. He became a leader of a group of Delhi Muslims. At the request of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi, he tried to exercise his spiritual power in favour of the Sultan in his war with the Emperor Babur but was unsuccessful. After Babur had mounted the throne of Delhi he allowed the Saiyid to continue living in the palaces of Firuzabad Fort, near Delhi and he was even honoured by Babur's successor, Humayun. During the reign of Islam Shah Sur, the Saiyid reached the height of his fame and was treated with exaggerated deference, even the Sultan and his nobility waiting on him slavishly.

Meanwhile two other Saiyids also migrated to northern India from Iraq or Iran. One was a scholar, Mir Saiyid Shamsu'd-Din,<sup>2</sup> the other was Saiyid Abu Talib. Their arrival aroused hopes in many Indian Saiyid families who wished to find suitable matches for their daughters. Saiyid Shah Muhammad Firuzabadi, for instance, was the father of several marriageable daughters. Having been unable to secure for them suitable Saiyid husbands in India, he invited the two to visit him in Firuzabad. Reluctantly the invitation was accepted for their real preference was to live as wandering dervishes. When Saiyid Shah Muhammad offered Abu Talib one of his daughters in marriage, she was refused, and soon afterwards (955/1548) the two Saiyids were found murdered in their host's house. Naturally Shah Muhammad was the chief suspect. As popular agitation mounted over their deaths, the people of Delhi demonstrated against what they believed to be a grave injustice perpetrated against two descendants of the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>3</sup> An inquiry by two high-ranking government officials was initiated. Shah Muhammad expressed his innocence. A joint assembly of the 'ulama' of Lahore, Delhi, Jaunpur and Bihar was convened by Islam Shah Sur. At the hearing the accused Shah Muhammad strongly repudiated the charges, challenging the prosecutors to take any action they wished, but reminding them that all through Islamic history Saiyids had been insulted and persecuted by their enemies. Shaikh Aman Panipati was the only 'alim and sufi who refused to attend the court, protesting his unwillingness to judge a Saiyid in such humiliating circumstances. While deeply regretting the death of

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS. f. 254b, Manchester MS. f. 287a.

<sup>2</sup>For a long time Mir Saiyid Shamsu'd-Din had lived in Kabul. The Emperor Humayun also deeply respected him.

<sup>3</sup>The tragedy was compared to that of the Karbala in which Imam Husain, a grandson of Prophet Muhammad, and his seventy-two followers were killed on 10 Muharram 61/10 October 680. The elegies written to commemorate the death of the Saiyids passionately compared their fate with the cruelties perpetrated on the Prophet Muhammad's family by its enemies (AA, pp. 209-10).



the two Saiyids, Shaikh Aṣṣan stated his concern was with the abasement of another. To him a Saiyid was incapable of committing an offence which was generally the work of a devil.

The case dragged on for some months and finally Saiyid Shah Muhammad died in prison. A number of local people in Delhi kidnapped the body and dragged it through the bazaar with a rope tied round its feet. Later it was buried close to the Delhi Fort.<sup>1</sup>

Another of Delhi's notable migrants during this period, who was also a descendant of the Ghau'su'l-A'zam was Shaikh 'Abdu'llah from Baghdad, the son of Saiyid 'Umar. He settled near the capital in a village in the vicinity of Bhit. According to tradition his supernatural powers prevented robbers from entering the village and he was also responsible for initiating large numbers of disciples. Shaikh 'Abdu'llah died on 10 Rabi' I 1037/19 Nov. 1627.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Hasan, the eldest son of Shaikh Hasan Tahir,<sup>3</sup> was initiated by his father into the Chishtiyya order. Before making a *hajj* to Mecca he also became a Qadiriyya, in Yemen. After his return from Arabia he lived in Agra. Shaikh Muhammad Hasan appears to have migrated to Delhi sometime before his death as it is the place of his burial. However it is also possible that his body was taken from Agra for burial in the Bijai Mandal bastion, near the site of his father's tomb.

In the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq asserts that Shaikh Muhammad Hasan had a charismatic spiritual influence over his contemporaries. When he emerged from his cell, anyone seeing him would automatically cry out '*Takbir*' (Allah is Great). Preferring to be in the company of God he would wait impatiently for dusk, then light candles for meditation. Apparently he dictated some of his mystical thoughts although he later destroyed the drafts. Some of his letters, however, were put into book form and a number of his treatises, all compiled by his disciples, survived until the end of the sixteenth century.

From a letter quoted by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq we learn of Shaikh Muhammad Hasan's exuberant enthusiasm for the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Nothing but the Essence (*Zat*) or Absolute Being existed, the Shaikh stated unequivocally. The external manifestations of all aspects were Attributes of the Unknowable Essence. He reminded his disciples that although all manifestations were apart from Essence and particular aspects of Reality, there was no duality and the reality of many (in terms of their substances or as opposed to the Essence, such as Pure Light and unmixed darkness) was inconceivable. What was visible, said the Shaikh, was a theophany which was mixed with darkness and was collectively

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 208-10.

<sup>2</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup>HSI, pp. 265-66.



known as *ziya*<sup>1</sup> (brilliance). All manifestations (that is, the universe) were perishable. All intelligible forms of prototypes had originally been manifested through the Divine consciousness, the Perfect Light. The Shaikh also reaffirmed that the universe was a macrocosm of which man was the microcosm; man, created in the image of God, was the manifestation of True Unity and relative multiplicity.

On 27 Rajab 944/30 December 1537 Shaikh Muhammad Hasan died. Of his many disciples one was an uncle of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq : Shaikh Fazlu'llah, who was also known as Shaikh Manjhu.<sup>1</sup> The most famous of all his disciples however was Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq of Jhanjhana, east of Delhi. During the second half of the sixteenth century Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq was regarded by Indian scholars and sufis as one of the leading exponents of Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy.

Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq noted that all contingent beings are the theophany of the Divine Light, the truth should be sought by contemplating Reality in every contingent being. This does not mean that God is incarnated in these contingent beings, but that the entire Universe is the manifestation (or exteriorization) of Divine Attributes and Divine Names. Creation is a concrete manifestation of something which already existed in God's mind and is a theophany (*tajalli-i Ilahi*) in which the idea of a *creatio ex nihilo* has no basis. Everything other than Reality is bound by the process of annihilation. God as Absolute, argued the Shah, is unfettered by the attributes which men can comprehend, and the concept of 'other than God' is therefore meaningless.

In another work the Shah dealt with *zikr* (recollection), advocating like others before him that the best form of *zikr* was contemplation with a picture of one's *pir* in mind. He believed this to be the most superior of all ascetic exercises. After obligatory prayers and fasting, a newly-initiated mystic had no alternative but to perform this type of *zikr* if he were to hasten along the sufi path. In true Qadiri style, the Shah had an obsessive love and respect for Saiyids. One story connected with this aspect of the Shah's character was that after a certain Saiyid had been imprisoned the Shah first arranged his escape, and then insisted on being incarcerated in his place.<sup>2</sup>

After his death in 949/1542-43, Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq was succeeded by his disciple, Shaikh Hajji of Delhi. The Hajji was the son of the Shah's *pir* but rose to prominence through Shah 'Abdu'r Razzaq's teachings.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Yusuf, another disciple of the Shah, who compiled his *pir's malfuzat*, also came from Delhi. Saiyid 'Ali, a favourite disciple of Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq, chose to live in Ludhiana.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 235-37.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 237-41; *Gulzar-i abrar*, Manchester MS. f. 158b.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamadani, *Kalimatu's-sadiqin*, Mashhad MS., p. 237.

<sup>4</sup>AA, p. 237.



Another eminent Qadiriyya who, though fleetingly, lived in Delhi, was Mir Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal bin 'Aliu'd-Din Husaini. His ancestors were from Zaidpur, near Jaunpur, but later they migrated to Daulatabad. Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal was born in Daulatabad where he was educated. Like his ancestors who had been initiated into the Chishtiyya order by the descendants of Saiyid Muhammad Gisu Daraz, Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal also became a Chishti.

Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal compiled an abridged version of a book on *Hadis* by Majdu'd-Din Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Firuzabadi (b. 729/1329 at Kazirun, d. 817/1414 at Zabid). The title of the original was *Safar al-So'ada* or *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*. In 941/1534 Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal compiled this work in the hope that the merit from this act might stem the plague epidemic then raging in Gujarat and the impending invasion of Humayun in Gujarat might also be averted.

Apparently Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal remained in Gujarat until 947/1540-41 and then travelled to Mecca. Either there or in Medina he became a Qadiri. Returning to Ahmadabad, he was invited by the Khan-i Khanan Bairam Khan to move to Delhi. After the Khan-i Khanan's fall from power in 967/1560 he remained in the capital where he died at the end of 968/1561.<sup>1</sup>

A scholar of no mean merit, Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Awwal also wrote commentaries on various works, both religious and literary. Of these the most famous is his *Faiz al-Bari*, a commentary on al-Bukhari's *Sahih*.<sup>2</sup> He also wrote a treatise on the soul which he called the *Ma'rifat-i nafs*<sup>3</sup> and another on sufism, *al-Sair wa'l-suluk*. His commentary of the *Futuh al-Makkiya* by Ibn 'Arabi simplified the author's complex theories.

Mir Saiyid Ibrahim Irajī, the son of Mir Mu'in 'Abdu'l-Qadir Hasani, and a disciple of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Shattari, received initiation into several sufic orders. Basically, however, he can be called a Qadiriyya. It has been claimed that Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din compiled the *Risala-i Shattariyya* for Mir Saiyid Ibrahim. He was passionately fond of books, delighting in laboriously copying them out by hand and writing comments on their more esoteric passages. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, the Mir was Delhi's most outstanding scholar. Moreover he was humble enough to learn from members of the 'ulama' who periodically visited him to sharpen their own religious perception. However he had little interest in teaching ordinary Muslims. His relations with the Chishtiyyas

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 253-54; *Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS. f. 159b, Manchester MS. f. 17bb.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad bin Isma'il al-Bukhari (b. 194/810, d. 256/870) travelled widely to collect the traditions of Prophet Muhammad. He compiled a celebrated work entitled *Sahih*, working on it for sixteen years. The number of traditions with full *isnads* (chain of authority) is 73977, excluding the repetitions, however, the total is 2762. Sunnis regard the work as next to the Qur'an in importance.

<sup>3</sup>Extracts from it are given in the *Akhbarul-akhyar*, pp. 254-55.



were cordial although he was never known to have joined their *sama'* gatherings. In 953/1546-47 he died and was buried in the complex of the tomb of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya'.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most truthful exponents of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* among Qadiriyyas was Shaikh Amanu'llah Panipati to whom we have already made reference. Although his name was actually 'Abdu'l-Malik, he achieved fame under his title, Amanu'llah. Associated with several orders, Shaikh Amanu'llah was foremost a Qadiriyya and a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Mawdud Lari, who introduced him to the *Fusus al-Hikam* and other famous works on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Amanu'llah must have often been present during the evenings when Shaikh Muhammad Mawdud became filled with ecstasy, ordered all books from the room and then delivered *extempore* lectures on the Unity of Being.<sup>2</sup>

Totally involved with the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Shaikh Aman claimed he could deliver public lectures on its principles without veiling them by the use of anecdotes or similes, and even then could fully convince his audience of the truth of his message. He also asserted that, when a sufi novice, he could use two completely acceptable arguments in defence of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and that later the number increased to sixteen.

The author of a number of treatises on *Tasawwuf* and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, in the *Asbat al-Ahadiyya* Shaikh Aman meaningfully reinterpreted the universality of Reality and its process of encompassing the essence of phenomenal existence and embodying what was beyond existence. Tracing the history of the controversy over the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in the *Asbat al-Ahadiyya* the Shaikh quoted the Persian sufi and poet, Mawlana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, who in his *Sharh-i Ruba'iyat* had clarified the most basic attacks on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* by its detractors. Rumi asserted that some unenlightened interpreters of sufi aphorism believed that Divine Reality was infused into all existences. Such a fallacy, said the Shaikh, had arisen from a rationalization that the whole exists only in sections, which meant it was believed that God existed through His creations, depending Himself on their existence and that His attributes also depended on the attributes of created beings. To sufis like Shaikh Aman or Rumi such a view was founded on a total ignorance of the truth, and was also sheer heresy. Adherents to another wrong ideal believed that in His primordial absoluteness God was free of attributes, but the stage of His self-revelation deprived Him of His former state and He infused Himself into phenomenal objects. Therefore, according to this line of thinking, the separate and transcendental existence of God remained unproven and He was known only through His emanations. Shaikh Aman

<sup>1</sup>AA, ff. 250-51.

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Mawdud belonged to Agra but in his old age migrated to Panipat, where he died. (AA, p. 234).



fiercely believed this view also contradicted the notion of the self-revelation of the Absolute and was not essentially different from the position of the first group.

According to Shaikh Aman the hierarchical order of *Wujud* as defined by the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* merely included varying degrees of self-manifestations of the Absolute. Being represented in His transcendent absoluteness, continued the Shaikh, was beyond the dichotomy of 'existence' and 'non-existence'; quiddity (*mahiyya*) was not to be understood in its general sense but in the following special sense of Essence. The recurrence (*tajdid*) of creation was the revelation of the Essence, first to Himself, then in a perpetual cycle of the passing away of forms. In conclusion the unknowable Essence (or God existing in Himself) was so Absolute that it was even free from the attribute of absoluteness.

Amanu'llah also wrote a detailed commentary on the *Lawa'ih* of Mawlana 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami. In it he stressed that the perfection of a dervish depended on a refinement of morals, coupled with an intense devotion to Muhammad's family and their descendants. So profound was the Shaikh's own respect for Saiyids that as a lecturer he would remain standing while the children of Saiyids played in the streets outside.

Shaikh Aman, however, never founded his own *khanqah* and lived in a very humble dwelling. So scrupulous was he to avoid any form of ownership that he was constantly distributing gifts in charity. He fasted incessantly and during the night took little sleep. His excessive *zikr* and meditation often made him neglect his obligatory prayers. When praying, he periodically found himself unable to recite beyond the fourth verse of the opening chapter of the Qur'an where the line, 'Thee do we serve and Thee do we beseech for help' would produce in him an ecstatic state.

Although sick with fever, on 11 Rabi' II 957/29 April 1550 Shaikh Amanu'llah Panipati conducted the 'urs of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani (the Ghausu'l-A'zam) and then dispensed food to the people of Delhi before collapsing and dying the following day. He was buried near the grave of his *pir*, Shaikh Muhammad Mawdud.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Shaikh Aman's general unwillingness to enrol disciples, by the time of his death these were quite numerous. Of them Shaikh Tajud-Din Zakariyya Ajodhani was the most outstanding. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq highly praises Shaikh Tajud Din for his excellent personal qualities, as well as for his extensive knowledge of sufism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>2</sup> Although he subscribed to the view held by a considerable number of Akbar's courtiers that the Emperor was the Perfect Man (as devised by Ibn 'Arabi and his followers), thereby becoming a target for the merciless

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 241-42.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, p. 242.



ridicule of Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni,<sup>1</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's profound respect for Shaikh Tajud-Din never altered.

Among other disciples of Shaikh Aman Panipati was Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's father. In the early days of his career as a mystic Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, had been a Suhrawardiyya. On hearing of the famous Shaikh Aman he decided to join the Qadiriyya order. Traditionally, Shaikh Aman would test the attitudes of his new disciples and Shaikh Saifu'd-Din was no exception. When asked to express his own feelings towards mysticism Shaikh Saifu'd-Din replied that he often felt the whole universe encircling him and that he in turn encircled it. Shaikh Aman decided that an understanding of the Unity of Being was already germinating in his new disciple.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Saifu'd-Din's father, Shaikh Sa'du'llah, died in 928/1522 when he was only eight years old and it would therefore seem that the former was born in 920/1514. His ancestors had excelled both in military and literary skills,<sup>3</sup> but Shaikh Sa'du'llah himself was basically a mystic. From his early childhood the serene and pious environment of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din's home made him introspective and meditative, his ears echoed with the mystical verses of Amir Khusrau<sup>4</sup> and he witnessed the hard ascetic exercises performed by his aged father.

After his father's death despite his youth Shaikh Saifu'd-Din cared for his mother, at the same time acquiring higher literary and religious education. Although poor and sometimes starving, he continued in his dedication to learning, prayers and meditation. As a child an overpowering love of beauty was a basic inclination, although naturally he did not understand its significance. When he was about five or six he had fallen in love with a boy of the same age; when he grew older he believed the feeling of an appreciation of beauty-associated with love to be natural and pure. Even in old age he had forcibly to overcome his passion for love and beauty lest they should undermine his sufi routine. As a mystic melancholy and despair periodically prompted Shaikh Saifu'd-Din to contemplate suicide. He found it difficult to accept that a large number of sufis, saints and holy men who had a strong faith in the Unity of Being were so widely considered by theologians to be misguided. Gradually his obsession with this concept filled his every moment. He saw even in the smallest particle of matter the theophany of an infinite light and continually felt trapped by the intensity of his own mystical insight and by his earthly fetters.

Like his elder brother, Mushtaqi, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din also served in the

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, II, p. 258; *RIM*, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup>*MRM*, pp. 148-51.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, pp. 168-74.



retinue of various nobles only to support himself, never for personal gain. He believed that worldly pleasure was comparable to the ephemeral enjoyment connected with nocturnal emissions which were followed by remorse. To him, opposing sides in debates each supported some part of the truth. He believed religious discussion should be free of belligerent words which merely satisfied human passions. The egocentric brawling and intriguing of the 'ulama' at Akbar's court weighed heavily on the Shaikh's mind, and he was grateful to God that he was neither a scholar nor a theologian.<sup>1</sup>

When lecturing, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din used a number of analogies to persuade other mystics to see One in the many and many in the One. The Essence was Infinite and the manifestation of the thousands of various aspects of His forms was subject to His will. The Light was indivisible and inseparable and even if a multitude of lamps were lit from one single lamp its own light was not divided. Likewise the Divine Being was the source of the existence of all objects. In His own right He was Absolute. Self-determination (*ta'ayyunat*) of the Absolute which was divided into *mahiyya* (quiddities) was not a process which reason could comprehend using the analogy of the division of physical objects. He illustrated this by an earthen vase in which children made holes and then put in a lamp. Only the light was seen from outside, although the lamp remained unaffected. Similarly the Absolute, despite His "self-determination", retained His primordial Oneness.

As regards the question whether the universe was 'from Him' (*Azu ast*) or 'by Him' (*Badu ast*), according to Shaikh Saifu'd-Din the best form of expression was the former. In fact the real meaning of 'all is from Him' (*Hama az ust*) was identical with the sense of 'all is He' (*Hama ust*). True comprehension of this subtle idea related to the heart rather than speech. With regard to expressing one's feelings about the Unity of Being, all forms of expression were of equal merit. The essential meaning behind the two expressions, 'the universe is His manifestation' and 'the universe is His creation,' were identical. However, the Shaikh did admit that with maturity he preferred to refrain in public from ecstatic expressions of his youth, thus avoiding conflict with the *Shari'a*. Among fellow travellers, however, and in a hidden retreat, mystical expressions could be used.<sup>2</sup>

Allegations by jurists that *sama'* bred hypocrisy the Shaikh believed to be unfounded, arguing that the listener who had lost consciousness of his own individual existence could not be guilty of hypocrisy.<sup>3</sup> He himself was an ardent listener to Persian verses and Hindi *dohas* and this *rubai* by 'Umar Khayyam (c. 412/1021-22-515 or 516/1122) would invariably

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, p. 304.

<sup>3</sup>HSI, pp. 92-93.



reduce him to tears:

In its early life this jug was madly in love,  
Crazed by the curling locks of its sweetheart.  
The handle you see at its neck,  
Had been the hand around the neck of its beloved.

Shaikh Saifu'd-Din's lectures were so emotional and expressive that often his listeners would beg him to talk on subjects which really moved them such as Divine love, the longing for God and the pangs of separation. Passages referring to threats from God in the Qur'an so grieved and agitated the Shaikh that in his household they were only read in hushed tones. Those filled with hope and promises were chanted out loudly. Eagerly awaiting death, during his last illness the Shaikh prayed for release for, he said, as one was already weary after a few days spent in an inn so after 70 years of life one was naturally desperate for death.<sup>1</sup> Before he achieved his life's ambition (on 27 Sha'ban 990/16 Sept. 1582), Shaikh Saifu'd-Din performed the *pas-i anfas*<sup>2</sup> for he believed this was possible for sufis even after the limbs had ceased to function.<sup>3</sup>

Although Shaikh Saifu'd-Din was a poet who had taken "Saifi" as a pen-name, his verses no longer survive. However his son, 'Abdu'l-Haqq, reproduced a *qasida* in praise of Shaikh Aman Panipati and another two *ghazals* by him which are in the traditional mystical style of poetry eulogizing Divine love and ascetic poverty. The *Wahdat al-Wujud* theme is also always present in what has survived. He writes,

'To the scholarly gnostics it is authoritatively known,  
That He is the 'Ayn (Essence) of the universe but is distant from it.  
Sometimes He, like a newly wedded bride hides His face behind a veil,  
Sometimes He is seen producing confusion, rioting and the tearing of clothes.'<sup>4</sup>

In a fit of ecstasy Shaikh Saifu'd-Din also wrote a *masnawi* (*Silsilat al-wisal*, Chain of Unity), in one day. Neither the *masnawi* nor a couple of other treatises, also on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, survive; only a short extract from a treatise entitled the *Kashifat* has been preserved in the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*. This extract, pointing out the different forms of perception of the manifestations of the Absolute, re-emphasizes the reality of man as seen by the scholars of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>5</sup>

Although few disciples were graced by his instruction, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din gave special attention to the education of his son, 'Abdu'l-Haqq, who was born in Muharram 958/January 1551 when Shaikh Saifu'd-Din was about thirty-seven years old. 'Abdu'l-Haqq was a melancholy and

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 308-9.

<sup>2</sup>Breath-control, HSI, pp. 272, 341, 353.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, p. 310.

<sup>4</sup>AA, p. 307.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, pp. 306-7.



meditative child who was also precocious. His father's unique method of teaching further increased his learning. Although intensely mystical, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din proved an enthusiastic and encouraging teacher, urging his pupil to spread his interests to cover various classics and grammatical texts.

From his earliest years 'Abdu'l-Haqq refused to behave like a child playing games and idly amusing himself. A tireless student, he would arrive at school before daybreak and begin studying. Besides daily reading, memorizing and discussing his lessons, he would prepare written notes on them, and during the evening continue his study. His parents became distressed by the extent of his seriousness and lack of exercise. When forced to go to bed he would pretend to sleep then quietly resume his studies. On several occasions 'Abdu'l-Haqq's turban caught alight, yet he remained oblivious until his scalp itself began burning. As well, he pursued a rigorous schedule of prayer and fasting. Completing his education at the age of twenty-two, the Shaikh began to teach advanced theological scholars.

'Abdu'l-Haqq's father had awakened in his son a passionate interest in both the Unity of Being and the Qadiriyya order. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's devotion to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani, who in the minds of his followers in the Islamic world was a facsimile of the Prophet Muhammad and a compendium of religious knowledge and piety, was without limit. In order to satisfy his son's mystical urge, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din initiated him as a Qadiriyya. Later he advised him to become a disciple of the most illustrious living Qadiriyya *pir*, Shaikh Musa.

On 6 Shawwal 985/17 Dec. 1577 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was given sufi initiation into the Qadiriyya order by Shaikh Musa, who by that time was living permanently at Akbar's court in Fathpur-Sikri, his younger brother Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir having retired to Multan after the dispute to which we have already referred. It would seem that this initiation occurred at Fathpur-Sikri or, if it did take place in Delhi, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq must have accompanied his *pir* to Fathpur-Sikri and stayed there for perhaps a year, making frequent visits to Delhi to see his by then ailing father.

In Sept. 1578 Akbar returned to Fathpur-Sikri after an expedition against the Rajputs and the second round of religious debates in the 'Ibadat-Khana and Anup Tala'o (tank) was resumed.<sup>1</sup> In these discussions Shaikh 'Abdu'n-Nabi and Makhdumu'l-Mulk emerged as leading rivals to each other. During this period also, the 'ulama' signed the *mahzar*.<sup>2</sup> Naturally Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq came in touch with his

<sup>1</sup>S.A.A. Rizvi and V.J.A. Flynn, *Fathpur-Sikri*, Bombay, 1975, pp. 14, 30-31, 44; *RIM*, pp. 128-40.

<sup>2</sup>*RIM*, pp. 141-75.



*pir's* friends, Shaikh 'Abu'l-Fazl and Faizi. He also became friendly with other dignitaries of the court. However the eclectic trend in the new religious developments disgusted him as did the parties of Makdumu'l-Mulk and 'Abdu'n-Nabi as well as their opponents. He was reminded of his father's disappointment over greedy and status conscious '*ulama*' and he decided to withdraw to Delhi. Although his *pir* Shaikh Musa remained a close associate of Abu'l-Fazl and Faizi, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's enthusiastic devotion to his *pir* never waned. In both prose and poetry he eulogized Shaikh Musa.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq refused to take part in the war which was waged by '*ulama*' leaders, however, and was therefore regarded as being neutral to the new imperial policies.

After his father's death in 1582 the Shaikh remained in Delhi looking after his widowed mother. By that time the thrust of the Emperor's opposition had also abated,<sup>2</sup> but the death of the Emperor's half-brother, Mirza Hakim (at the end of July 1585) in Kabul caused the Emperor to leave for Kabul the following month, and he did not return to Agra until 1598. Therefore as has been claimed<sup>3</sup> there was nothing political to prompt Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to leave India and he only did so for he felt in himself the awakening of a compelling urge to go on pilgrimage. As his mother was loathe to let him go, he promised he would return after only visiting Mecca and Medina.

After leaving Delhi early in 995/1586-87, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq travelled through Malwa and Gujarat. In Ujjain he stayed with Mirza 'Aziz Koka, the governor of Malwa, and at Mandu was the guest of Shaikh Ghausi Shattari, the author of the *Gulazar-i Abrar*. When he reached Ahmadabad it was the wrong season for sea travel so he spent some months with Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Ahmad Bakhshi.<sup>4</sup> There Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also called on the celebrated Shattari, Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din; Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq showed no interest in the Shattari teachings but sat instead at the feet of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din to learn the Qadiriyya *zikrs*. By the time the sailing season arrived, his host had made provision for his passage to the Arabian peninsula. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq finally reached Mecca sometime before Ramazan 996/July-August 1588.

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 206.

<sup>2</sup>RIM, pp. 171-73.

<sup>3</sup>Nizami states that when Shaikh Muhaddis decided to migrate from India the religious climate was exceedingly polluted, a miserable atmosphere having been created by the misguided '*ulama*' at court. In such circumstances no revered personality could remain in India. (*Hayat-i Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi*, Delhi, 1953, pp. 91-92.) Nizami's Urdu rhetoric, while impressive to his orthodox co-religionists, is not based on fact. At that time the court was busily engaged in wars against the Yusufzis and the Rawshana'is, regarded as heretics by orthodox Sunnis. Throughout those crucial years Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq remained in India and only religious motives and mystical ecstasy prompted him to make a pilgrimage. MRM, pp. 156-58.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS., f. 323a, Manchester MS., f. 370b.



Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq soon became proficient in such outstanding *Hadis* works as the *Sahih Muslim*<sup>1</sup> and *Sahih Bukhari* and studied under Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Muttaqi al-Qadiri al-Shazili, formerly of India, who will be referred to more fully in Chapter Six. He also spent some time in retreat in a cell near the Ka'ba. On 21 Zu'lhijja, 998/21 Oct. 1590 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq claimed to have seen the Prophet Muhammad in a dream, delivering a sermon on *Hadis*. This marked the high point of his religious aspirations and he decided to settle permanently in the Holy Land.

Under the influence of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was to retain an attachment to the Hanafi school of jurisprudence which had begun to wane because of the impact of the Shafi'i 'ulama' of Mecca. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Muttaqi not only initiated his disciple into the Chishtiyya, Qadiriyya, Madayniyya<sup>2</sup> and Shaziliyya<sup>3</sup> *silsilas*, but also imbued him with a moderate attitude towards the controversies which concerned the different sufi orders and the various schools of 'ulama'. The serenity of the intellectual and spiritual life of Mecca appealed greatly to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, but his *pir*, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, himself an emigrant from India reminded him of his obligations

<sup>1</sup>The famous book of traditions by Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, who was born at Nishapur in 202/817 or 206/821, died in 261/875 and was buried at Nasrabad near Nishapur.

<sup>2</sup>Abu Madyan Shu'ayab bin al-Husain al-Andalusi, the founder of the Madayniyya order, was born in 520/1126 near Seville. Early in his life, he learnt weaving to earn his livelihood, but later migrated to North Africa for further studies. He completed his religious and mystic education at Fez. On his way to Mecca, he called on the Ghaus al-A'zam, Shaikh 'Abdu'l Qadir. Finally he settled at Bijaya (Bougie) and became exceedingly popular in Maghrib. In 594/1198 he died near Tlemcen. His teachings are marked by deep humility and trust in God. He wrote: 'Action accompanied by pride profits no man; idleness accompanied by humility harms no man. He who renounces calculation and choice lives a better life.' He often repeated this line: 'Say: Allah! and abandon all that is material or has to do with the material, thou desirest to attain the true goal?' *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I, pp. 137-38.

A modern scholar says, 'His great merit and his great success lie in his having realised, in a way that his hearers could understand, a happy synthesis of the influences which he had undergone. With him the moderate sufism that Ghazali had already a century earlier incorporated in Muslim orthodoxy, principally for the use of the privileged élite, is now adapted to the mentality of the North African believer, whether man of the people or literate . . . Abu Madyan . . . gave once and for all the keynote for North African mysticism'. *EI*, I, pp. 137-38.

<sup>3</sup>The Shaziliyya order is a branch of the Madayniyya. Its founder, Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ash-Shazili, was a disciple of Abu Madyan's pupil 'Abdu's-Salam bin Mashish (d. 625/1227-28). Abu'l-Hasan was born in 593/1196. At the suggestion of his *pir*, Abu'l-Hasan retired to a village in Ifriqiya called Shazila and started his career as a sufi teacher from there. The order came to be known as the Shaziliyya, after his village's name. The orthodox opposition to his teachings prompted him to migrate to Egypt where he became very popular. In 656/1258 he died at Humaisra on the Red Sea coast.



to his family and urged him to return home speedily.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab ably parried Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's arguments against returning to India, by encouraging him to believe that from the Islamic point of view the situation there was not as gloomy as his pupil had imagined. His instructions to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq included the following points. The most sacred duty of Muslims was to strengthen (both internally and externally) their beliefs within the framework of Sunni law and then to study dispassionately the sufi works of scholars of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Subtle mystical secrets contained in sufi works which appeared unintelligible should be passed over and not be allowed to interfere with the religious beliefs of the sufis. Neither gullibility nor resistance to new ideas were useful to the sagacious.

"Should you see anyone who recites *kalima* and performs obligatory prayers and keeps the fast, while uttering such remarks (as violate the principle of *Shari'a*) you should consider him needy of help rather than hastening to declare him an infidel or a heretic."

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab reiterated that all religious and pious activities such as *namaz*, fasting, recitation of the Qur'an and teaching and instructions amounted to *zikr*.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was finally persuaded to return to India. Leaving the Holy Land in Shawwal 999/July-August 1591, he reached the sub-continent by sea in 1000/1592.<sup>1</sup> By that time active opposition to the 'ulama' had died and Kashmir had been annexed to the Mughal empire and the Emperor's presence near the western frontiers had curbed the expansionist designs of 'Abdu'llah Khan Uzbek. A scheme for strengthening the friendship of orthodox Sunnis who supported the Court had been launched. Without abounding in religious and philosophical enthusiasm, some of Akbar's courtiers had started commentaries on the Qur'an and were compiling biographical accounts of the Prophet Muhammad. One Shaikh Ya'qub Sarfi of Kashmir<sup>2</sup> (d. 1003/1595), was working on a large commentary on the Qur'an and had completed a biography of Muhammad in verse entitled the *Maghazi'l-Nabi*.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, however, stood by his decision to dissociate himself from the Court, turning to teaching and compiling works on *Hadis*.<sup>3</sup>

Soon after Khwaja Baqi Billah's establishment of the Naqshbandiyya *khanqah* at Delhi in 1008/1599, he and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq became firm friends. An authority suggests that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq became the Khwaja's disciple.<sup>4</sup> Following the example of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah

<sup>1</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, *Zadu'l-muttaqin*, Rampur MS., f. 36b, 37a; *MRM*, pp. 157-58.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 299-300; *RIM*, pp. 189-90, 309-13, 329.

<sup>3</sup>*RIM*, pp. 327-33.

<sup>4</sup>*Kalimatu's-sadiqin*, p. 245. According to Muhammad Sadiq, Ghausu'l A'zam Shaikh Abdu'l-Qadir suggested the idea to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq in a dream.



Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq corresponded with such members of the nobility as Murtaza Khan and the Khan-i Khanan. After Akbar's sudden death on 16 October 1605 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq hoped that the powerful dignitaries friendly to him might succeed in replacing Akbar's policy of 'peace with all' by strict Sunni rule as envisaged by Ghazali. He wrote a letter to Murtaza Khan suggesting that in the discharge of his worldly duties he should never neglect the path of the *Shari'a*.

As soon as a courtier informed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq of Jahangir's interest in the *Hadis*, he wrote a short political treatise, the *Nuriyya-i Sultaniyya*, which will be dealt with in some detail in Chapter Seven. However, the Shaikh's main concern remained teaching, writing and sufism, and in general he maintained a detachment from the world. His *khanqah* in Delhi which he built some time before 1611 and where most of his time was spent, was known as the *Khanqah-i Qadiriyya*.

After the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah his disciple, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din, remained in close contact with Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq. Another intimate friend and guide was the Qadiriyya *pir*, Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali Qadiri.<sup>1</sup>

In the 14th year of Jahangir's reign (1619-20) the Emperor Jahangir invited Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to pay him his respects and to present him with the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*. Apart from this, Jahangir took no interest whatsoever in the Shaikh's monumental contributions to the study of *Hadis* which by this time had made him a prominent figure, but he rewarded Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq with lavish honours and gifts.<sup>2</sup>

Just prior to his death, however, Jahangir became alienated from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and his son Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq. He exiled Nuru'l-Haqq to Kabul and ordered Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and Shaikh Husamu'd-Din to where he was camped in Kashmir. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq travelled to Lahore where he visited Miyan Mir. The Miyan predicted that before he saw the Emperor he would return safely to Delhi. Four days later Jahangir died.<sup>3</sup> The reasons for the change in Jahangir's attitude towards the aged Shaikh remain obscure. According to Dara-Shukoh people made unjust allegations against him and his son. It would seem that Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq who was *qazi* of Agra, was accused of friendship with Prince Khurram who later ascended the throne as Shahjahan. The Prince had rebelled against his father in 1622 waging war against him until his surrender in March 1626. His young sons (Dara, then aged ten and Aurangzib aged eight) were sent as hostages to the Emperor's court. Nevertheless he remained a potential threat to the throne. Jahangir's rapidly declining health precipitated the traditional Mughal war of

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>2</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>Dara-Shukoh, *Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, Tehran, n.d., p. 115.



succession. Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq's interest in Prince Khurram prompted the retribution meted out to those whom Jahangir considered a threat to his throne, and caused Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq's exile to Kabul. After the accession to Shahjahan to the throne not only were Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq allowed to return to Delhi but the latter was reappointed *qazi* in Agra.<sup>1</sup>

On 21 Rabi' I 1052/19 June 1642 Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq died at the age of ninety-four. In accordance with his will he was buried at the *Hauzi-i Shamsi*, a prestigious cemetery which had the reputation of being a place of rest for the pious. On his grave stone a lengthy account of his life and activities was inscribed.

According to this tablet the Shaikh had written a total of one hundred books, both long and short. In a list of his works which the Shaikh himself compiled there were forty-nine titles to which were added another eleven. Therefore the Shaikh wrote some sixty treatises, as well as a collection of sixty-eight letters. All these works were designed to propagate orthodox interpretations of the Sunni Shari'a and way of life.

What made Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq a celebrity both in his own lifetime and after was his works on *Hadis*. Of these the most important was the Persian commentary on the *Mishkat al-masabih*<sup>2</sup> entitled the *Ashi'at al-lama'at*, which he started on 13 Zu'l-hijja 1019/26 February 1611 and completed on 24 Rabi' II 1025/11 May 1616.<sup>3</sup> When the first half had

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Sadiq, who knew both Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq and Khwaja Husamu'd-Din intimately, says that Shahjahan, impressed with the abilities of the Shaikh from the time he was a prince, had appointed him the *qazi* of Akbarabad. This post he held until 1048/1638-39 when the *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani* was completed (cf. 319b). The reasons for their exile were entirely political and Nur Jahan's alleged Shi'i orthodoxy had no part in the decision taken against these revered personalities. cf. *Hayat-i Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi*, pp. 148-49.

<sup>2</sup>The *Mishkat al-masabih* is the revised and enlarged edition of *Masabih al-sunna* (or *al-Duja*) by Abu Muhammad Husain b. Mas'ud b. Muhammad al-Farra Al-Baghawi (d. 516/1122), a *Hadis* scholar and authority of Shafi'ite law. Omitting the *isnad* (chain of reporters) he first gives the traditions from the *Sahihs* by al-Bukhari and Muslim, and from the *Sunan* works of Abu Dawud al-Sijistani (b. 207/817, d. 275/889), Abu 'Isa Muhammad al-Tirmizi (d. 279/892), Abu 'Abdu'r-Rahman al-Nasa'i (d. 303/915) and Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad Ibn Maja (d. 273/886). In his work Baghawi did not include traditions which, in his judgment, were *munkar* (rejected) or *mawzu* (spurious), although he included traditions based on only one authority (*gharib*) and which were known to have belonged to the *za'if* class, weak or unauthentic. On the whole the work was intended to serve as a guide for the pious. Waliu'd-Din Muhammad b. 'Abdu'llah al-Khatib al-Tabrizi (d. 743/1342), editor of the *Mishkat al-masabih*, aimed at providing an authoritative compendium of *Hadis* for future generations. So successful was he in his task that the *Mishkat al-masabih* became a popular text for use in Sunni seminaries and prompted a spate of commentaries by many scholars.

<sup>3</sup>Colophon of the manuscript in the Habibganj collection of Aligarh University manuscript. This is in the Shaikh's own handwriting and shows that the work was completed in the *Khanqah-i Qadiriyya*. The colophon itself is dated 1049/1639-40.



been completed it occurred to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to write an Arabic commentary on certain subtle points of the *Mishkat* which he had not found it expedient to explain to the less educated Muslims.<sup>1</sup> The progress of the Arabic commentary was more rapid and both works were finished at the same time. The Arabic commentary, the *Lama'at al-tanqih*, was completed on 24 Rajab 1025/7 August 1616;<sup>2</sup> it also aimed to reconcile the Hanafi *Fiqh* with *Hadits*. Then there was a summary of his own Persian commentary entitled *Jama' al-barakat*, and he compiled a book on *Asma' al-Rijal* as well.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also wrote a Persian commentary on the *Sufar al-sa'ada* or *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* by Majdu'd-Din Muhammad bin Ya'qub al-Firuzabadi (b. 729/1329, d. 817/1414) who was also the author of an Arabic dictionary, *al-Qamus*. The *Sufar al-sa'ada* contains many traditions relating to the Prophet Muhammad's practices of (1) *wuzu* (ablutions), *namaz* and *ad'iya* (prayer), *siyam* (fasting), (2) Friday services, (3) pilgrimages, (4) *azkar* (invocations) and (5) his way of life in general. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq chose to write this in Persian even though the original was also in that language, partly because of the great popularity of the work and partly to defend the views of some authorities on the Hanafi law which Firuzabadi's work tended to undermine. The critical sections of Firuzabadi offered a basis for the opponents of the Hanafi law and the schismatics to mislead the simple-minded Sunnis. He entitled the work *al-Tariq al-qawim fi sharh al-Sirat al-mustaqim*.<sup>4</sup>

'Abdu'l-Haqq wrote the *Madariju'n-nubuwwa* also in Persian, again to refute Muslim intellectuals who challenged some of the miracles claimed to have been performed by the Prophet Muhammad. The work asserts the importance of the execution of miracles to the Prophet Muhammad's mission and offers a detailed analysis of him in relation to these miracles.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq wrote the *Ma sabata Bi's-Sunna* as a rejection of the superstitious beliefs and practices of Muslims regarding different lunar months, particularly those relating to the 10th day of Muharram on which Imam Husain was martyred at Karbala (61H/10 October 680). The work shows the author's deep concern over the penetration of Shi'i ideas amongst Sunnis. This also led to a book by him about the twelve Shi'i Imams, called the *Faza'il-A'imma Isna 'Ashr*, which was an attempt to counter misconceptions Sunnis might develop from reading Shi'i works eulogizing their leading Imams. It was also intended to dis-

<sup>1</sup>*Ashi'at al-Lama'at*, I, p. a.

<sup>2</sup>Colophon of the *Lama'at al-tanqih* in Khudabakhsh Library, Patna, V, no. 361.

<sup>3</sup>The work contains the list of the narrators of *ahadis* in the *Mishkat*.

<sup>4</sup>*Sharh sufar al-Sa'ada*, Lucknow, 1885, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>S.A.A. Rizvi, 'Muhammad in South Asian Biographies', p. 189, in Wang Gungwa ed., *Self and biography*, Sydney, 1974, p. 109.



courage some of the hostilities of extremist Sunnis towards the family and descendants of 'Ali.

A Persian treatise, the *Takmilu'l-iman*, by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq gives details in controversial matters of the fundamental aspects of Sunni beliefs and advocates the adoption of a moderate path. He stressed that sinfulness and villainy did not make a *mu'min* (faithful) an infidel, adding that the companions of the Prophet Muhammad had joined in funeral prayers of sinners and wicked people.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's writings on sufism are generally an attempt to reconcile the *Shari'a* with the *Tariqa*; nevertheless they also assert the superiority of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. His celebrated *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*, relating to Indian sufis, is prefaced by a long biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani, giving a reasonable selection of the great Qadiri's miracles. It emphasizes the belief that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir was superior to all his predecessors and that his precedence over all future generations of saints of God was also guaranteed. To Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, the Ghausul-A'zam's claim, 'My foot is on the neck of every saint of God'<sup>2</sup> was a well-considered statement.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also wrote a treatise in Arabic supporting this assertion, and saying that Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi's contention that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir had made this statement in a state of mystical intoxication was incorrect for, according to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, the Ghausul-A'zam had uttered these words in a state of complete sobriety and with full understanding of their implications.<sup>3</sup>

The most significant contribution in Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's efforts to popularize the teachings of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani is his Persian translation of a collection of seventy-eight of Ghausul-A'zam's sermons called the *Futuh al-Ghayb*. Compelling in style, the sermons show a marked religious sensitivity and avoid the complexities of mystical terminology. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq himself considered Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's sermons to be a true facsimile of the Prophet Muhammad's eloquent expressions. He had first read the *Futuh al-Ghayb* with his *pir*, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Muttaqi, who had suggested that he should propagate the ideas in it. In India he acquired a copy and commenced its translation into Persian. During a short stay in Lahore in 1023/1614-15 in Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali's *khanqah* he completed it, giving his own work, the title *Miftah-i Futuh* (Key to the *Futuh*). Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq later added a *ruba'i* saying that the total number of Arabic letters in the title of the book also gave the year of its completion.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Takmilu'l-iman*, Delhi 1312/1895, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup>*Tanbih al-arif* or *al-Risalat fi bayan qawl qadami*, in the Raza Library, Rampur.

<sup>4</sup>'Abdu'l-Haqq, *Sharh-i Futuh al-ghayb*, pp. 421-23.



Another treatise, the *Marj al-bahrain fi'l-jama' bain al-Tariqain* was written by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to place the *Tariqa* within the framework of the *Shari'a*. It was also an attempt to remind Sunnis that the pursuit of philosophy was the principal reason for the deviation of Sunnis from the path of orthodoxy and sanctity.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaikh's letter to the Mujaddid,<sup>2</sup> and a treatise entitled the *Wujudiyya*, show his own unshakable faith in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Extremely informative, his letters give a clear explanation of his own views of sufism and the mystical life. He also summarized the Masnawi of Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's sufism was impregnated with an unceasing desire to reconcile the 'exoteric' with the 'esoteric', the *Shari'a* with the *Tariqa* and *Fiqh* with *Tasawwuf*.<sup>3</sup> In his mystical writings he strove to cut across differences in sufic ideologies and practices and set himself the arduous task of reminding sufis that dogmatism was alien to mysticism. However he himself believed that there was nothing in the world of greater worth than a judicious combination of scholarship, sufic ecstasy and *ma'rifa*, although he did admit that this ideal was rarely achieved. Only such sufis as Baghdad's Junaid had succeeded in a perfect reconciliation of scholarship with sufism. What generally occurred was that one either became overpowered with mystic ecstasy, love and introspection, or became dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge, therefore to bridge the gap was arduous. The Qadiri ideal of a perfect life in the world, according to the Shaikh, was firstly to adhere to the laws of the *Shari'a* and the teachings of the *Faqihs* (jurists) and then to follow the sufi path. Those who chose to become mystics without obtaining mastery over *Fiqh* had strayed from the safe path. It was impossible for a scholar and an 'alim to obtain initiation into sufism and to achieve perfection in that realm. However, after ecstasy and mystic illumination had filled a student mystic, a return to scholarship was impossible. To Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq this was an explanation of the saying 'be a Faqih-sufi and not a sufi-Faqih'.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was himself initiated into many *silsilas* of the eastern and western Islamic world and after his return to Delhi became the disciple of the *Naqshbandiyya*, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. His Qadiriyya spiritual affiliations however, remained the major influence in his life. He introduced among Indian sufis and thinkers the teachings and practices of Abu 'Abdu'llah Muhammad bin Harazim (d. 633/1236), a disciple of Abu Madyan, and those of Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali ash-Shazili.

<sup>1</sup>*Marj al-bahrain*, Rampur MS., fasl 3.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>*Kitab al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, p. 307.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 126-27.



The corner-stone of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's teachings was the maxim of the Ghausu'l-A'zam that those aspects of the *Haqiqa* which the *Shari'a* rejected were heresy.

If one's spiritual revelations were incompatible with the *Shari'a* one instantly became a heretic and an infidel.<sup>1</sup> There was no intrinsic difference between the teachings and practices of the many sufi orders, for all were founded on the *Shari'a* and pious practices. The controversy over the religious superiority of supererogatory prayers and *zikr* was meaningless, and even occasional financial assistance offered to some truly pious Muslims was of greater benefit than supererogatory prayers.<sup>2</sup> The prophets had prescribed numerous forms of worship designed to lead the seeker to Allah but the Muhammad's path was infallible. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also asserted that men were instinctively prompted to embrace Islam.<sup>3</sup> He advised Muslims to ignore the dialectics of the philosophers regarding the nature of God and the forms of pre-existent images, urging them instead to believe in the Names and Attributes of God the Most High according to orthodox Muslim belief.<sup>4</sup>

There were two ways of seeking favour from God. Firstly there was the traditional, formal way of praying in the hour of need. Those chosen among the spiritualists and gnostics did not seek from Him anything but His satisfaction (*riza*) and absolute good. Unselfishly they did not ask for anything for themselves. According to gnostics, the Divine invitation 'to ask' contained in the Qur'an did not refer to personal favours, but only to supplications from the 'absolute good' and His satisfaction.<sup>5</sup>

To Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq both the Jabriyya<sup>6</sup> and Qadariyya<sup>7</sup> were extremists; the former believed that men were helpless and God was

<sup>1</sup>*Kitab al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, pp. 127-28.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 122. The Shaikh's argument is based on the following verse of the Qur'an: So set thy purpose (O Muhammad) for religion as a man by nature upright—the nature (framed) of Allah, in which He hath created man. There is no altering (the laws of) Allah's creation. That is the right religion, but most men know not—(XXX, 30). A *Hadis* of the Prophet Muhammad says, 'Every child that is born conforms to the true religion, then his parents make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian, as a beast is born entire in all its limbs (or without a defect); do you see one born maimed or mutilated?'. And further, 'The nature made by Allah in which He had created men, there is no altering Allah's creation that is the right religion.' Muhammad 'Ali, *The Holy Qur'an*, Lahore, 1963, note 1937. The word used is *fitra*, meaning nature, constitution or natural or original quality. To Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, *fitra* meant nature and science.

<sup>4</sup>*al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, p. 125.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>6</sup>A group of Muslim thinkers who believed that man was not endowed with Free Will (*Qadar*) and that all human acts were predestined.

<sup>7</sup>*Qadariyya* in opposition to *Jabriyya* assert a belief in 'Free Will' and predestination.



responsible for all their actions, thus men were reduced to inanimate objects like stone; while the Qadiriyya maintained that men were responsible for their own actions, ignoring the Divine Will. Both, asserted the Shaikh, had strayed from the middle path.

Rejecting the views of philosophers and materialists about the properties of fire, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq argued that God had endowed fire with the power to burn and that He could destroy and save whoever He liked.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq strongly rejected the idea put forward by some sufis that rules of worship, prayers and obedience to the laws of the *Shari'a* were meant only for externalists and widows and that dervishes were naturally exempt. He asserted that these misguided sufis failed to remember that the laws relating to prayer and fasting had been laid down initially by the prophets; and in their final form they emanated from Muhammad who by God's Will was perfecting human ethics. Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi's statement in the '*Awarif al-Ma'arif*' that an apprentice sufi should avoid the company of dervishes who ignored their traditional duties and whom he believed to be worse than the worldly and therefore infinitely more detrimental to spiritual advancement, was also supported by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Shaikh, *mujahada* (mortification) and *riyazat* (ascetic exercises) were instruments for precipitating obedience to God and the *Shari'a*. As an example of this he specified the Hindu yogis and soothsayers who obtained supernatural powers by strict forms of asceticism and were able to perform miracles by the temporary gift of Divine favour (*istidraj*). Many Muslims, misled by such miraculous power, most undesirably became favourably disposed to the faith of their enemies.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq gave considerable publicity to a book entitled the *Faqr al-Muhammadi* by Ahmad bin Ibrahim al-Wasiti al-Harazimi, a famous Arab dervish. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq considered the *Muhammadiyya Tariqa* a matchless sufi path. The work was modelled on the ascetic aspects of the Prophet Muhammad's life and that of some of his companions. The followers of this path considered the Prophet Muhammad to be their *murshid* (guide). The first step in initiation into this path was to repent of one's sins to God and to pledge control of the senses, eyes, ears, tongue, stomach, sexual organs, hands and feet. The tongue should not indulge in slander, calumny or lying; no evil should be heard; the eyes should not fall on the women of others or young boys and the heart should not be involved in anything illicit. Basically, the *Faqr al-*

<sup>1</sup>*al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 32, 278.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 274-75.



*Muhammadi* advocated strict observance of the ethical traditions of the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

The second duty of the followers of the *Faqr al-Muhammadi* was a *namaz* featuring absolute concentration on Allah. In *Faqr al-Muhammadi* the most essential duty for sufis was to bind the heart mystically to the Prophet, loving him and considering him to be their Shaikh and Imam.<sup>2</sup> A recitation of the Qur'an, believed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, moved the followers of the *Faqr al-Muhammadi* to ecstasy and the words aroused perception of the 'theophany' and illumination of the heart. They believed that the words of the Qur'an as spoken by the Beloved united them in love for Him.<sup>3</sup>

Adherents to this path were to be distinguished from sufi impostors who unlawfully ate rich food, craved for the sight of a pretty face, yearned to savour sweet melodies and exhibited feigned ecstasy, chatting constantly about gnosis. Prompted by material motives alone, these charlatans sought followers only to receive their gifts. Entire evenings would be spent in listening to music and dancing, after which they would faint when they stood for prayer. They could not be called Muslims, said the Shaikh; only those who followed the rules of the *Faqr al-Muhammadi* were among the truly faithful.<sup>4</sup>

Trenchant criticism was directed by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq against those who, in the name of *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) violated the *Shari'a* and were dissolute libertines. These impostors cried *Hama Ust* (All is He), while their souls were foul and vicious. To them the Unity of Being was an excuse for unrestrained behaviour. So audacious were they that they even went to the extent of hurling abuse at those sufis who were truly virtuous.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq endorsed his father's interpretation of the phrases, *Hama Ust* and *Hama az Ust* which he considered essentially identical. Only the true sense of *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) explained the significance of the many in the One, and as long as a man became entangled in linguistic gymnastics he was unable truly to understand *Tawhid*. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq invited sufis to ignore the linguistic complexities and to believe in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. *Tawhid*, he contended, amounted to perceiving the Divine incomparability through speech, knowledge and sight. There were four categories of *Tawhid*: that of speech, knowledge, faith, and of mystic experience and Essence. Whatever the division was, the conception of *Tawhid* bred the concept of duality and for this reason sufis could say that the *Tawhid* of *Haqq* (Reality) could not be perceived except by God himself. The *Tawhid* of *Haqq* or *Haqq*-in the Unity of His Own Being was inconceivable. Knowledge

<sup>1</sup>*al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, pp. 36-40.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 46-48.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 338.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 42.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 45.



(*ilm*), perception (*shu'ur*) and experience (*shuhud*) were attributes. Although in a true perception of the Being, Attributes were Essence *per se*, the stage of the Unity of Essence was higher than that of attributes. The Shaikh illustrated this with the saying that both the existence of the One and the non-existence of the One were facts, the existence of Two being a misguided notion.<sup>1</sup>

In his famous letter to the Mujaddid, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq wrote that mystics who received revelations admitted it was possible for their experiences to become perverted from time to time. He added that Ibn 'Arabi's concept of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* did not belong to the class of mystical utterances made in a state of ecstasy, for it was firmly rooted in his own convictions. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's teacher, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, considered the works of Ibn 'Arabi and his followers to be sugar-coated drops of poison<sup>2</sup> and, like Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, emphasized that both *Faqihs* and a section of the sufi movement condemned Ibn 'Arabi's works as conflicting with their respective beliefs. Although he believed the *Fusus al-Hikam* was written in a special style, sufi discipline was not exclusively based on the ideas it contained; the framework of sufi theories actually coming from works such as the *Risala*<sup>3</sup> of Abu'l-Qasim al-Qushairi, *Manazil al-Sa'irin*,<sup>4</sup> *'Awarif al-Ma'arif*<sup>5</sup> and the like. The Shaikh believed that since the meanings of parts of Ibn 'Arabi's works aroused doubts, they were unacceptable to a true Muslim. It was necessary to take the intelligible parts and see them in terms of their apparent sense only, for only God knew the author's true intentions. However it should be noted that the controversy was over the outer meaning and did not warrant a total rejection of Ibn 'Arabi. For example, both sufis and 'ulama' hotly debated the question surrounding the good faith (*iman*) of Fir'aun (Pharaoh) originally raised by Ibn 'Arabi. Several verses of the Qur'an reproached Fir'aun for his pride, tyranny and heresy and none of the 'ulama' and sufis prior to Ibn 'Arabi had credited him with good faith.<sup>6</sup> In several places in the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* Ibn 'Arabi himself condemned Fir'aun on the basis of certain lines contained in the Qur'an, but in the *Fusus al-Hikam* he contradicted himself. In such circumstances it should be kept in mind that Ibn 'Arabi's real beliefs concerning Fir'aun were contained in the *Futuhat* and were compatible with the universal beliefs of the 'ulama' and sufis. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, Ibn 'Arabi believed that a confession of faith in a situation of despair and despondency by an obstinate sinner or tyrant (for example, Fir'aun) was not inadmissible to God.<sup>7</sup> Although the 'ulama' did not

<sup>1</sup>*al-Makatib wa'r-rasa'il*, p. 344.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, pp. 63-64.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 88-92.

<sup>7</sup>*Takmilu'l-iman*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 269,



agree, Ibn 'Arabi could be credited with having merely made an error of judgment in his understanding of Fir'aun.

Also briefly discussed by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was the claim of the Chishtiyya and of a number of other sufi orders that Hasan Basri had been initiated by 'Ali.<sup>1</sup> To him it appeared that past scholars of *Hadis* must have been sceptical about this tradition as not one of them had quoted it. An *ijaza*<sup>2</sup> given by Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra<sup>3</sup> specifically mentioned that Hasan Basri had associated with some of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. The right tradition, therefore, according to the Shaikh, was that Hasan Basri had acquired a knowledge of sufism and had received initiation from some companions of the Prophet. However, he added that Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Suyuti had lucidly argued that Hasan Basri had been associated with 'Ali at one time or another. In the *Jami' al-Usul*, Jalalu'd-Din had written that Hasan Basri had been born in Medina two years before the death of the second Caliph 'Umar (13/634-23/644). He also claimed that during the regime of the Caliph 'Usman (23/644-35/656) Hasan Basri was in Medina, migrating to Basra after 'Usman's assassination, and that he had met 'Ali in Medina. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq believed that there was insufficient evidence that Hasan visited 'Ali at Basra. According to sufi traditions his association with a number of distinguished spiritualists was sufficient to support the idea that he had probably learnt *zikr* from 'Ali, and that this did not necessarily mean a long association.<sup>4</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's scepticism over this claim did not, however, lead him to question the authenticity of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Suyuti.

The sons and disciples of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq were strict adherents to the traditions of his Qadiriyya *khanqah* and were mystics as well as scholars. Of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's three sons, Shaikh 'Ali Muhammad wrote treatises on the teachings and the biographies of Chishtiyya sufis, a biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir and a dictionary of Arabic, Persian and Turkish. The most outstanding of the three was the eldest, Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq (b. 983/1575-76) who was also his father's successor. He wrote a history of India from the time of Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad bin Sam to the accession of Jahangir<sup>5</sup> (1014/1605). He also wrote a Persian commentary on the *Qiranu's-sa'dain*, which Amir Khusrau Dihlawi (b. 651/1253, d. 725/1325) had written about the meeting of Sultan Mu'izzu'd-Din Kai-Qubad with his father, Nasiru'd-Din Bughra Khan. He gave his translation the title *Nur al-'Ain fi sharh Qiranu's-*

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 27-31.

<sup>2</sup>Diploma given by a sufi *pir* to his disciple authorizing him to enrol disciples.

<sup>3</sup>HSI, pp. 92-94.

<sup>4</sup>*al-Makatab wa'r-rasa'il*, p. 354.

<sup>5</sup>RIM, pp. 296-98.



*sa'dain*. Like his father, his most valuable contribution was his works on *Hadis*. He also wrote a Persian commentary on the *Sahih* of al-Bukhari entitled the *Taisir al-qari fi sharh Sahih al-Bukhari* and dedicated it to Aurangzib. He also translated into Persian the *Shama'il al-Nabi* of Abu 'Isa Muhammad bin 'Isa bin Saurah al-Tirmizi<sup>1</sup> (d. 279/892-93) which was another collection of traditions concerning the person and character of the Prophet Muhammad.

After the death of Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq on 9 Shawwal 1073/17 May 1663 his only son, Shaikh Nuru'llah had little impact in Delhi as an '*alim*'. Two of the latter's four sons, however, Shaikh Saifu'llah and Shaikh Muhibbu'llah were well-known scholars. Shaikh Saifu'llah also translated the *Shama'il al-Nabi* of Tirmizi into Persian and dedicated it to the Emperor Aurangzib. Shaikh Muhibbu'llah wrote a Persian commentary on the *Sahih* of Muslim which was later edited and added to by Shaikh Muhibbu'llah's eldest son, Hafiz Muhammad Fakhru'd-Din. This work was called *Manba' al-'Ilm Fi Sharh Sahih Muslim*. Continuing the family tradition Hafiz's son, Shaikhu'l-Islam Muhammad, was also a scholar of *Hadis* and made a further translation of the *Sahih* of Bukhari. The first half of this work was completed at the end of Jumada II 1166/May 1753. His son Shaikh Salamu'llah (d. 1229/1813 or 1233/1817) migrated to Rampur from Delhi. From the end of the 18th century through to the 19th, Rampur was a centre for the work of the great-grandsons of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq.

After more than two centuries of dedication to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and his descendants their disciples were scattered throughout India. A modern scholar<sup>2</sup> gives an account of twenty disciples of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq. Among these Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din (the son of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud) and Khwaja Khwurd (the son of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah) were leading Naqshbandiyya *pirs* and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Jalil of Allahabad was a famous Chishtiyya. Shaikh Muhammad Yahya, a son of the Mujaddid, also learnt *Hadis* from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq. Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamadani (the author of the *Kalimatu's-Sadiqin* and the *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*) was a disciple of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah but had also attended Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's lectures on *Hadis*.

Maulana Sulaiman Kurd was another of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's disciples intensely devoted to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. He wrote a Persian *masnawi* entitled *Manba' al-Khairat* eulogizing the Ghausu'l-A'zam. From Delhi the Maulana migrated to Ahmadabad where he

<sup>1</sup>Abu 'Isa Muhammad bin 'Isa bin Saurah al-Tirmizi is well-known for the authorship of one of the six canonical collections of traditions (*al-Jami'* or *al-Sahih* or *al-Sunan*).

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Saleem Akhtar, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi Ka Silsilah-i Talamiza, *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, March and June, 1972, pp. 309-51.



founded a seminary. His son, Maulana Ahmad (d. 21 Jumada II 1112/2 December 1700),<sup>1</sup> was both a scholar and a teacher of some repute. Of Maulana Ahmad's disciples, Maulana Nuru'd-Din Ahmadabadi (b. 10 Jumada I 1063/8 April 1653, d. 9 Sha'ban 1155/9 October 1742) was mainly responsible for the popularity of the seminary of Maulana Sulaiman Kurd in Ahmadabad. He wrote commentaries on several chapters of the Qur'an, on the *Sahih* by al-Bukhari and also on the *Fusus al-Hikam*.<sup>2</sup>

A number of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's disciples came from Jaunpur, Banaras and Bihar. Shaikh Taiyib (the son of Mu'in) was from Banaras. He was a sufi rather than a scholar, whose work among the people spread the Qadiriyya order in that region. His disciple Shaikh Yasin, was born in 1022/1613-14 and moved between Banaras, Jaunpur and Kora. He wrote a biographical dictionary on sufis called the *Manaqibu'l-'arifin*.<sup>3</sup>

The most famous of Shaikh Taiyib's disciples who also studied with Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi was Shaikh Muhammad Rashid 'Usmani bin Muhammad Mustafa. He was born on 10 Zu'lqa'da 1000/18 August 1592. Originally he was initiated as a Chishtiyya by his father but after being received into the Qadiriyya order he became greatly interested in its teachings and enthusiastically propagated the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi. He wrote commentaries on controversial passages in Ibn 'Arabi's work in order to convince the '*ulama*' of their true significance.<sup>4</sup>

In Rajab 1074/February 1664 Shaikh Muhammad Rashid went to Allahabad and was invited to endorse a *fatwa* issued by the '*ulama*' effectively stating that Shaikh Muhibbu'llah and his disciple, Muhammadi, were both heretics and infidels. The Shaikh refused to sign it, arguing that if Shaikh Muhibbu'llah and Muhammadi could not be called Muslims then who could.<sup>5</sup>

During Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid's life-time the growing popularity of Shi'ism and the study of philosophy in Jaunpur had made the Shaikh an untiring defender of Sunni orthodoxy. He wrote a guide for theological polemics, known as the *Rashidiyya*. It would seem that both Shi'i leaders and Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri (b. 993/1585, d. 1062/1652), the outstanding logician and philosopher of Jaunpur, opposed the Shaikh from their respective standpoints. Although both Mulla Mahmud and the Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, II, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Abdu'l-Ha'i, *Nuzhat, al-khawahir*, V, Hyderabad, 1955-57, p. 434.

<sup>4</sup>Ghulam Sharafu'd-Din, *Ganj-i Faiyazi*, Cambridge MS., *Browne Persian Catalogue*, III, ff. 112a-13a.

<sup>5</sup>Shaikh Abu'l-Faiyaz Qamaru'l Haqq Ghulam Rashid, *Ganj-i Arshadi*, Aligarh University Library, f. 105b.



were disciples of Ustaz al-Mulk Muhammad Afzal bin Hamza al-'Usmani of Jaunpur, they had completely opposing views on religion. Apart from promoting the study of determinism and free will,<sup>1</sup> Mulla Mahmud strongly refuted Ibn 'Arabi's mystical brand of philosophy. Nevertheless he was a frequent caller at the Shaikh's *khanqah*; both seemed to enjoy each other's company, often indulging in lengthy religious discussions. It is said that the Shaikh suffered from migraine headaches and although the Mulla prescribed certain medicines the Shaikh was ultimately cured by taking honey and *kalaunji*.<sup>2</sup> When the Mulla showed surprise at the cure, the Shaikh told him that he had drawn upon a *Hadis* in which the Prophet Muhammad had instructed that honey and *kalaunji* were sure remedies for all diseases with the exception of death. On another occasion when the Shaikh praised the qualities of dawn, the Mulla told him that both of them were always awake through the night, the Shaikh for his *tahajjud* prayers and he for the study of astronomy.<sup>3</sup> Without this fact, the beauty of daybreak would have been lost to them.

Although Shahjahan invited Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid to visit him he refused to go. Throughout his life he remained withdrawn from the outside world, mixing only with his disciples. Like Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri,<sup>4</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid also did not take meat and had specified in his will that meat should not be cooked at his *fatiha* or death prayers.<sup>5</sup> On 9 Ramazan 1083/29 December 1672 the Shaikh died.<sup>6</sup> He was both an *'alim* and a sufi and was known by his titles, Shamsu'l-Haqq Faiyaz Diwan and Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid. He had four talented sons—Miyān Shaikh Muhammad Hamid,<sup>7</sup> Shaikh Muhammad Arshad, Shaikh Ghulam Mu'inu'd-Din<sup>8</sup> and Shaikh Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup>His most important works on the subject are *al-Hikma al-baligha* and its commentary by the Mulla himself, entitled *al-Shams al-bazigha*, Lucknow, 1288/1871.

<sup>2</sup>A special preparation of cooked vegetables popular in eastern U.P.

<sup>3</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, f. 181b.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, pp. 126-29.

<sup>5</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, ff. 12b, 198a; *Ganj-i Arshadi*, f. 50a.

<sup>6</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, 12b.

<sup>7</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Hamid was born in 1037/1627-28. Besides obtaining an advanced literary and religious education, he was trained as a soldier and for a year served in the imperial army. After resigning from military service he retired to Purnea in Bengal where he died on 24 Ramazan 1086/12 Dec. 1675. He compiled a collection of his father's verses entitled the *Diwan-i Shamsi*.

<sup>8</sup>Shaikh Ghulam Mu'inu'd-Din, the third son of Shaikh Muhammad Rashid (b. 24 Shawwal 1063/17 Sept. 1653), was also a soldier and scholar. On 8 Zu'lqada 1120/19 January 1709 he died fighting in the Deccan army of the Emperor Shah 'Alam Bahadur Shah I (1119/1707-1124/1712).

<sup>9</sup>The fourth, Shaikh Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din was born on 11 Rabi' II 1067/27 January 1657 and obtained both a literary education and military training. He died on 21 Jumada I 1147/19 October 1734.



Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid's successor, however, was his second son, Muhammad Arshad (b. 1041/1631-32). Like his elder brother he was inclined towards scholarly pursuits and wrote a book on Arabic syntax entitled the *Hidayat al-Nahw*. He initiated some disciples into the Chishtiyya order, but the majority of his disciples were Qadiriyyas. He was also a staunch follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, explaining its significance with examples from daily life. For example he divided the *Tawhid* or *Wahdat al-Wujud* into three categories. Firstly there was the *Tawhid-i Af'al* (Unity of Action) which revealed to sufis a perception of the mystical truth that the countless forms of activity taking place in the world were performed by no one but God. For example in writing letters it would seem that the words were the work of the pen but in fact they were made by the writer. The *Tawhid-i Sifati* (Unity of Attributes) meant that abilities such as hearing or seeing were nothing but an aspect of God the Most High. The *Tawhid-i Zat* (Unity of Essence) meant that Essence was Reality, forms and figures were multiplicity in Unity. He also argued that sufis should take heed of rank, each person being graded according to a fixed rule. Those who did not adequately respect this principle were guilty of heresy.<sup>1</sup>

On 24 Jumada II 1113/26 November 1701 Shaikh Muhammad Arshad died and was succeeded by his grandson, Shaikh Abu'l-Faiyaz Qamaru'l-Haqq Ghulam Rashid. Born on 8 Rabi' I 1096/12 February 1685, fourteen days after his birth, his mother died and on 20 Jumada II 1096/24 May 1685 his father, Muhibbu'llah, the son of Shaikh Arshad also died. Thereafter Ghulam Rashid was placed in the care of his grandfather, who educated him and later initiated him as a Qadiriyya.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Ghulam Rashid wrote a commentary on his grandfather's *Hidayat al-Nahw* and a Persian commentary on a well-known Arabic *qasida*, the *Qasida-i Ghausiya*, devoted to eulogies to Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani. Succeeding to his grandfather's position, Shaikh Ghulam Rashid also taught through the use of parables and anecdotes. He believed men were superior to angels, arguing that men had obtained ascendancy over their sensuality and having crushed the power of the devil, worshipped God and annihilated their individuality in the Reality. Angels, never being faced with such an obstacle, were therefore naturally inferior to men. To support this view he quoted a story related by Diwan 'Abdu'r-Rashid. The Diwan had seen a blind man in Banaras and asked him how he had become afflicted by his disability. The man told him that he had once seen a beautiful Gujarati girl and had been overcome with sensual desire. So distressed was he that he blinded himself that he might never again be exposed to such a beautiful countenance. Later, he decided

<sup>1</sup>*Ganj-i Arshadi*, f. 55a.

<sup>2</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, 4b.



that by depriving himself of his sight he had been distinctly cowardly and that he should have been able to see beauty as manifested by God and then ignored it for Reality.<sup>1</sup>

On 5 Safar 1167/2 Dec. 1753 Shaikh Ghulam Rashid died. His disciple and successor, Ghulam Sharafu'd-Din was also a scholar and mystic. The descendants of Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid and Shaikh Arshad all made the claim that control of the spirituality and welfare of Muslims had become dependent on the Indian Qadiriyyas.

An interesting sufi who was initiated as a Qadiriyya in the *khanqah* of Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid was Saiyid Hasan Rusul-Numa. Narnaul was the home of his ancestors and his father had been a servant of Abu'l-Hasan Asaf Khan (d. 1051/1641), the second son of Nur Jahan's father, I'timadu'd-Dawla, whom Shahjahan appointed his *wakil* or prime minister. After the death of his father, the Saiyid was unable to inherit his father's land in Narnaul and was therefore forced to seek work in Agra. The *Sadr* in whose service he was engaged proved unwilling to help the Saiyid try to regain his land. Saiyid Hasan therefore decided to become an '*alim*' in order to use his influence to revenge himself on the relatives who had seized his property.

In Jaunpur Saiyid Hasan studied for fourteen years and during this period he was in a highly impecunious state. His devotion to sufism was so intense that even his teacher would ask him questions on the *Tasawwuf*. On one occasion an eminent Hindu posed Saiyid Hasan's teacher an interesting question. He asked how one could explain why earthen pots of the same clay, baked in the same kiln, were used for different purposes (some for eating, others for elimination). Finding the question mystical the teacher directed the Hindu to his student, Hasan Rasul-Numa. Although the question was asked a number of times it was ignored until Saiyid Hasan began abusing the man verbally at the same time striking him. Then the Saiyid cried out that the action taken by him was the real answer to the Hindu's problem. The chastened Hindu lamented his stupidity.

Feeling an overwhelming desire to adopt Islam the Hindu asked Saiyid Hasan to convert him, but again received an indifferent reply. Urging him to earn the high merit emanating from conversion of a leading *kafir* to Islam, Hasan's teacher warned him that if the Hindu died an infidel Hasan would have to bear responsibility. Highly annoyed, the Saiyid told his teacher to summon the aspiring Muslim, then asked him if he knew the *kalima*. On receiving an affirmative reply the Saiyid told the Hindu he was a rascal, for with such knowledge nothing should have prevented his conversion. Moreover he himself, he argued, was being forced into the role of scoundrel, for such a conversion would puff him

<sup>1</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, f. 201a.



up with pride, forcing him into idolatry and thereby destroying his faith. The anecdote went on to relate that the Hindu did become a Muslim, although it neglected to mention whether or not the Saiyid converted him.<sup>1</sup>

The Saiyid's *pir* who initiated him into the Qadiriyya order was Diwan 'Abdu'r-Rashid himself. Before giving him his first lesson the Diwan ordered the Saiyid to bring sweets for the *fatiha*. The Saiyid urged his teacher to agree that the sweets should be eaten only by themselves. Meanwhile Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri the philosopher arrived and attempted to take the sweets for himself; however the Saiyid collected them and gave the remainder to a group of beggars.<sup>2</sup>

After his fourteen years of study and privation the Saiyid returned to Narnaul, by which time his original desire to regain his ancestral land had been quenched. He then moved to Delhi where for some time he was closely associated with Khwaja Khwurd, the son of Khwaja Muhammad Baqi. After Khwaja Khwurd had recommended a *mansabdar* to employ the Saiyid he was given Rs. 2 monthly to prepare the *mansabdar's* hookah for smoking. On taking up his duties, the Saiyid prepared it and immediately started smoking himself, justifying his action by saying that he wished to test it before it was presented to his master. Needless to say the *mansabdar* decided to forego the services of the Saiyid.<sup>3</sup>

By the time of Aurangzib's departure from Delhi for Marwar in September 1679, Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa was famous for his piety and asceticism. It is said that he even refused to allow Aurangzib to visit him.<sup>4</sup> Khwafi Khan mentions him in the *Muntakhabu'l-lubab* among an exclusive group of the leading sufis of Aurangzib's reign. According to him, the Saiyid's knowledge of Qur'anic exegesis and *Hadis* was both extensive and perceptive, and his accomplishments in asceticism and worship were considered unique in his age. Like *malamatis*<sup>5</sup> he would speak harshly to those he believed to be mad for riches or discourage them from visiting him.<sup>6</sup> However he did initiate some sincere devotees and was commonly believed to have enabled them to have visions of the Prophet Muhammad, hence his title *Rasul-Numa* (Guide to the Prophet). On 23 Sha'ban 1103/10 May 1692 the Saiyid died<sup>7</sup> and his tomb in Delhi continues to be a centre of devotion even today.

<sup>1</sup>*Tazkira-i Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa* (Delhi Persian, India Office MS.), ff. 1a-3b.

<sup>2</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, f. 177a.

<sup>3</sup>*Tazkira-i Saiyid Hasan Rasul Numa*, ff. 23a-26b.

<sup>4</sup>Muhammad Aman b. Muhammad Rahim, *Safinatu'l-'arifin*, India Office, Delhi Persian, f. 92b.

<sup>5</sup>*HSI*, pp. 42, 150.

<sup>6</sup>Muhammad Hashim Khafi Khan, *Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, I, Calcutta, 1860-74, pp. 552-53.

<sup>7</sup>*Safinatu'l-'arifin*, f. 92b; *Tazkira-i jami auliya'-i Dihli*, India Office, Delhi Persian MS., f. 78a.



*Miyan-Mir and His Legacy*

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq and his successors led dual roles as both sufis and 'alims but a unique legacy of mystical sensitivity and devotional exuberance was handed down to posterity by Miyan-Mir and his disciples. Most of them (in later life) abandoned their careers as theologians and scholars, choosing to live as ascetics and hermits.

Miyan-Mir's ancestors came from Siwistan in Sindh. Both his parents were from families of *qazis*. Qazi Qazan,<sup>1</sup> the father of Miyan-Mir's mother was a prominent 'alim who became a Mahdawi under the influence of Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur.<sup>2</sup> Under the influence of her father, Bibi Fatima, Miyan-Mir's mother, also became a sufi and practised the Mahdawi form of asceticism and *zikr* which she had been taught by her father. Qazi Sa'in Data bin Qazi Qalandar Faruqi, Miyan-Mir's father, also had mystical inclinations.

Miyan-Mir (Mir Muhammad) was born in 938/1531-32. He was one of five sons, one brother (Bolan) was older, three ('Usman, Tahir and Muhammad) were younger, all later became *qazis*, and there were also two sisters. As a child he did not receive a comprehensive theological and literary education and spoke the local Sindi dialect. At the age of twelve, however, under the influence of his mother's daily prayer vigils, he decided that she should teach him some mystic rituals. Later in the prime of his youth he was allowed into the jungle to practice self-mortification. Before he had reached adulthood Miyan-Mir had been initiated as a Qadiriyya sufi.

Miyan-Mir's *pir*, Shaikh Khizr,<sup>3</sup> was a sufi who passionately believed in rejecting all gifts, even offerings of *zakat*, unless they emanated from purely pious motives. Alone in the hills of Siwistan he would eat wild fruits and in winter wear only a small loin covering. He dug himself an 'oven' (*tanur*)<sup>4</sup> where he burned wood for heat in winter and also cooked. On a particularly scorching day the Governor of Siwistan visited Shaikh Khizr to find him sitting meditating on a stone, unshaded from the burning sun. When the Governor's shadow fell across the Shaikh he awoke and requested him to depart so that he would not make a shadow. Shaikh Khizr also told the Governor that he was terrified even to include him in his prayers in case anything other than God entered his heart simultaneously.

<sup>1</sup>MRM, pp. 91, 119.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 76-96; *Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>3</sup>supra, p. 72.

<sup>4</sup>In South Asia and the Middle East, Muslims cooked their bread in ovens dug out of the ground like small caves. Sometimes a clay or metal pot with fire in it would be put in the cave during winter. Many sufis and hermits would sit there for warmth during the night. The space was cramped and uncomfortable but they were protected from rain and wind.



A quite different reception, however, was extended to Miyan-Mir at their first meeting. After leaving his mother's house the Miyan walked into the jungle. There he found the 'oven', still warm, though the area was deserted. He became convinced that the 'oven' was the dwelling of a great saint. He waited patiently for three days for its inhabitant, during which time he took no nourishment. Freezing with cold he was sorely tempted to use the 'oven' for heat but crushing his lower self, he remained exposed to the freezing temperatures. When Shaikh Khizr finally appeared he told Miyan-Mir he had emerged from the 'oven' that very day and had not seen him. Later when recounting the story the Miyan explained that his *pir* must have become absent-minded about that time.<sup>1</sup>

About 963/1555-56 Miyan-Mir was released from Shaikh Khizr's tutelage as he was no longer in need of his ascetic guidance. He began living in mosques in Lahore, spending part of his time attending the lectures of Maulana Sa'du'llah, an outstanding *'alim* and scholar of Akbar's reign. In a short time Miyan-Mir had perfected his knowledge of both the traditional and rational texts prescribed for the *'ulama'*. He also studied under Maulana Ni'matu'llah, Maulana Sa'du'llah's disciple and the teacher of Dara-Shukoh's tutor, Mulla Mirak-Shaikh Harawi.

After the completion of his formal religious education Miyan-Mir turned to practical sufism. With a few disciples he began visiting the graves of eminent sufis in Lahore. Afterwards they would walk deep into the jungle where each would sit under a tree alone to meditate.

At prescribed hours of obligatory prayer they would assemble for congregational prayers. According to Dara-Shukoh this had been the Prophet Muhammad's way of meditating and the Miyan believed it was designed to obliterate all non-spiritual thoughts from the conscious mind.<sup>2</sup>

Emphasizing the importance of this form of meditation and contemplation, Miyan-Mir argued there were two ways of God. In the first He initiated a craving for Himself and then spontaneously drew the devotee towards Him. The *suluk* (sufi way) of meditation and mortification under the guidance of a perfect *pir* was the second path. The first stage of the sufi journey of the neophyte enabled him to reach the *'alam-i malakut*<sup>3</sup> during which his *pir* advised him to indulge in this method of meditation, which successfully severed the mind from all thoughts of other things. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hakim Siyalkoti<sup>4</sup> reminded the Mir that

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 27-29.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup>*Alam-malakut* is a spiritual domain corresponding to the celestial and angelic kingdom, intermediate between the *'alam-i jabarut* (the domain of Divine Omnipotence) and the *'alam-i mulk* (the physical world of existence). *HSI*, pp. 233, 351, 368.

<sup>4</sup>A distinguished scholar of Shahjahan's reign, Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hakim (d. 1067/1656-57) was the author of a number of commentaries on the popular Arabic and Persian classics. He was deeply interested in peripatetic philosophy, but his relations with *'ulama'* and sufis were very cordial.



this custom would keep the neophyte from congregational prayers. This objection was rejected, however, on the grounds that prayers were not mechanical and called for absolute concentration without which they were useless. As far as congregational prayers were concerned, Miyan-Mir asserted that he and his party never ignored them, and performed them even in the jungle.<sup>1</sup>

By about 1016/1607-08 Miyan-Mir's fame in Lahore had become such a burden to him that he migrated to Sirhind where he became a recluse. There he fell seriously ill, particularly with chronic pain in the knees. According to Miyan-Mir the Ghausu'l-A'zam appeared to him one night and cured him.

After a year in Sirhind, Miyan-Mir quietly slipped back to Lahore and settled in the quarter where the gardeners lived, known as the *muhalla* Baghbanan and later the Khafipura.<sup>2</sup> Although his presence gradually became known he tried to avoid contact with local Muslims, at the same time refusing all financial assistance. When returning gifts, Miyan-Mir would always say that the giver had mistaken him for a beggar while he in fact was rich with God.<sup>3</sup> He would go into the forest during the day, then retire to his cell at night. Later he remained hidden in his room walking with the aid of a stick and believing in the assistance of God above. His faith was so strong that he scorned sufis like Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, the recipient of lavish gifts,<sup>4</sup> and expressed doubts about the famous Suhrawardi's spiritual achievements.<sup>5</sup>

Dara-Shukoh records that one of his disciples claimed that the Miyan never slept at night and for several years used only one breath lasting for an entire night till sunrise. Even at eighty he was inhaling and exhaling only four times nightly. His life's philosophy was based on *Tawakkul* (trust in God) which was characterized by his throwing out water on a hot Lahore evening to ensure that none remained for the next day. The Miyan believed that *Khatra* (anxiety, disturbing thoughts) depended on imagination and that a loss of purpose resulted in a lack of anxiety. According to Miyan-Mir *namaz-i be khatra* (prayer without anxiety) involved an unequivocal commitment to God.<sup>5</sup>

In 1620 the Emperor Jahangir, *en route* to Kashmir from Sirhind, was informed that Miyan-Mir was an outstanding ascetic. He had already left Lahore and was unable to return to see the great Shaikh. At the Emperor's invitation Miyan-Mir visited his camp and overwhelmed Jahangir by his mystical discourse. So impressed was the Emperor with the Miyan's asceticism that he dared not present him with any gift except

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, pp. 190-93.

<sup>5</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 33, 42-43, 50.



for the skin of a white antelope to pray on.<sup>1</sup> Two years later when Shah 'Abbas Safawi of Iran besieged Qandahar the Emperor humbly requested Miyan-Mir to pray for him. Twice the Emperor Shahjahan called at Miyan-Mir's house in Lahore.<sup>2</sup> Despite such attentions from the powerful Miyan-Mir managed generally to remain aloof from worldly authorities.

Just before his death Miyan-Mir suffered a severe attack of dysentery and, as throughout life his ascetic nature had been strongly opposed to any form of human help, he refused to allow the governor of Lahore's physician to treat him. On 7 Rabi' I 1045/21 August 1635 Miyan-Mir died. The last rites were performed by his disciples and servants, while the Governor (Wazir Khan) and other leading citizens of Lahore joined the cortège.

The Miyan's body was buried near the grave of his disciple, Miyan-Nattha. His other disciples, such as Shaikh Abu'l-Makarim and Hajji Mustafa Kulal, had also previously been buried close to the site. This area, about a mile south-east of Lahore, became known as '*Alam-Ganj* (World Treasury). The village of Hashimpur (later called Darapur) was close to 'Alam-Ganj. After the Miyan's death, each Friday evening a large crowd would assemble at his tomb and circumambulate around it. Dara-Shukoh lamented that he had missed the Miyan's funeral, but he had said the mourning prayers in a dream.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout his life Miyan-Mir strictly adhered to the *Shari'a*, urging his disciples to do likewise. Insisting that the first stage in the sufic journey was obedience to the *Shari'a*, the perfect form of the *Tariqa* was reflected in the heart. This in turn prompted God to withdraw the veil from human nature, thus revealing Himself through an understanding of the significance of the *Haqiqa*. Therefore the *Shari'a* helped to regulate worldly affairs and led to the *Tariqa* stage of mysticism. Miyan-Mir also believed that the *Tariqa* was the way to purify the animal soul (*nafs*) from which evil tendencies were derived and that it was the source of a perception of the *Haqiqa*. In the *Haqiqa* the annihilation of one's self effaced all that was no Allah, leading to the stage of propinquity to God. In other words, says Miyan-Mir, man was constituted in the animal soul, the heart and the spirit. The first could only be reformed through obedience to the laws of the *Shari'a*, the heart then fulfilled the obligations of the *Tariqa*, and the renovation of the spirit depended on observing the rules of the *Haqiqa*.<sup>4</sup>

On one occasion Miyan-Mir was asked to explain in a lecture the signi-

<sup>1</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, pp. 286-87.

<sup>2</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 46-50.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 94-99.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 83.



ficance of the Qur'anic verse, 'Pray unto me and I will hear your prayer'.<sup>1</sup> He explained that people were generally concerned about the results of their prayers. In this verse he believed that God had called on Muslims to pray after expelling all other thoughts from the heart. After this it was hoped one's prayers would be answered. If one prayed with the heart engrossed in thoughts other than Allah, surely these prayers violated the spirit of the injunction contained in the verse. Miyan-Mir endorsed the views of Shaikh Najmu'd-Din<sup>2</sup> Razi that the purification of the heart and concentration in prayer were possible only through lawfully acquired food and righteous deeds. For example, Allah reminds Muslims, '...then they cry unto Allah, making their faith pure for Him only'<sup>3</sup> and '...Unto Him good words ascend, and the pious deed doth He exalt.'<sup>4</sup> These verses, according to Miyan-Mir, guaranteed the circumstances in which He answered prayers.<sup>5</sup>

The traditional sufi custom of wearing a patched cloak was severely criticised by Miyan-Mir as a trademark which attracted attention to sufis who were then offered gifts and given a great deal of publicity. In place of the patched cloak he himself wore a turban of coarse cloth and a cotton coat (*jama*). He washed his own clothes in the river, urging his disciples to be clean and tidy. He and his disciples wore garments that did not distinguish them from other Muslims. He affirmed that the condition of discipleship was *bay'a*,<sup>6</sup> rather than the wearing of a *khirqa*.<sup>7</sup>

Although Miyan-Mir indulged in *sama* he was not a fanatical devotee. Neither did he employ a musician (*qawwal*) as was the custom. Hindi

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XL, 60.

<sup>2</sup>The author of the famous Sufic work *Mirsadu'l-'ibab* completed in 620/1223.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, X, 23. The complete verse is as follows: He it is who maketh you to go on the land and the sea till, when ye are in the ships and they sail with them with a fair breeze and they are glad therein, a storm-wind reacheth them and the wave cometh unto them from every side and they deem that they are overwhelmed therein; (then) they cry unto Allah, making their faith pure for Him only; If Thou deliver us from this, we truly will be thankful of Thee.

<sup>4</sup>*Qur'an*, XXXV, 10. The complete verse is as follows: Whoso desireth power (should know that) all power belongeth to Allah. Unto Him good words ascend, and the pious deed doth He exalt; but those who plot iniquities, theirs will be an awful doom; and the plotting of such (folk) will come to naught.

<sup>5</sup>*Sakinatu'l-'auliya'*, pp. 83-85.

<sup>6</sup>Literally this Arabic word means the recognition of a superior authority by a certain number of persons. According to Ibn Khaldun, the *bay'a* originated with pre-Islamic trade practices involving the conclusion of a sale contract between the buyer and seller. A *bay'a* to a caliph or the political power (sultan) signified the oath of allegiance. It was rendered by a hand-shake; (Franz Rosenthal, the *Muqaddimah*, I, New York, 1958, pp. 428-30). The spiritual empire of the sufis borrowed a large number of terms and practices from political terminology and practices; this was the case with *bay'a*.

<sup>7</sup>*Sakinatu'l-'auliya'*, pp. 59-60.



songs<sup>1</sup> were his favourite but out of respect for the *Shari'a* and because of his own self-control he never experienced states of ecstasy. Although the impact of the music would be reflected in his face he always remained perfectly immobile.<sup>2</sup>

An ardent follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Miyan-Mir considered it so profoundly esoteric that he refused to divulge any of its secrets to ordinary Muslims. He likened conversations about the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to an oasis mirage, meaning that it would not quench anyone's thirst.<sup>3</sup>

revealed information

#### *Disciples of Miyan-Mir*

The very first of the disciples initiated by Miyan-Mir was Hajji Ni'matu'llah Sirhindi. During the Mir's illness at Sirhind he was so impressed by Ni'matu'llah's selfless devotion that he decided to make him a perfect sufi. Once, when recounting his spiritual experiences to a *khalifa* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati, Ni'matu'llah was told that what he thought was the '*alam-i malakut* (sphere of spirits) was in fact the sphere of genii which would ultimately cause his ruin. Ni'matu'llah thereupon decided to abandon the devotional exercises he had learnt from Miyan-Mir, the result being that he became so emotionally distressed that he decided to undertake pilgrimage to Mecca to recover his equilibrium. When the Miyan discovered his plan to go to Mecca, he told him to recite certain invocations which would take him to the holy city of his own accord. After repeating the invocations Ni'matu'llah reported the following morning that he could now be called a Hajji without having travelled to Mecca and from that time onwards he was known by that title. In 1017/1608-09 the Hajji died and his memory was very reverently cherished by the disciples of Miyan-Mir.<sup>4</sup>

Another of the Miyan-Mir's leading disciples, Miyan-Nattha, was also a native of Sirhind. His ancestors had been oil-pressers and he himself was illiterate. As a youth he was enlisted into Miyan-Mir's discipleship some time around 1007/1598-99, therefore his relationship with his *pir* was a lengthy one. So deeply beloved was he that the Miyan never objected to Miyan-Nattha's rather bold, although witty remarks. Towards the end of his life he became so obsessed with meditation that periodically he would spend successive days and nights sitting motionless on a wall, engrossed in contemplation. He would also hide in the jungle or in graveyards. While meditating he would neglect all refreshment. His *pir* would be so moved that he would send him some of his own rations.

<sup>1</sup>It indicates both the Sindhi and the Panjabi.

<sup>2</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>4</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 33-35, 133.



Miyan-Mir informed his disciples and associates that Miyan-Nattha had the ability to enter the '*alam-i malakut*' and correctly foretell future events. When a boil developed on Miyan-Mir's eyelid, Miyan-Nattha advised the use of a cucumber-seed paste, although a doctor had prescribed an operation. The Miyan acquiesced for he believed the remedy had been foreseen in the '*alam-i malakut*' and, even though Miyan-Nattha was still an ordinary disciple, he had reached a unique level of spiritual insight.

It was generally accepted that Miyan-Nattha could communicate with leaves, animals and with all sorts of animate and inanimate objects. He could also stop rain and hail-storms. During his last illness (he died in 1027/1618-19), he would sit on the porch of his *pir*'s house absorbed in meditation. At the moment of death his body remained upright in the contemplative position and only when his hands were touched it was realized he had died. From then until his death, there was a void in Miyan-Mir's life and he grieved intensely over the death of his favourite disciple.<sup>1</sup>

Another senior disciple of Miyan-Mir was also an inhabitant of Sirhind. Hajji Mustafa was originally a potter whose excessive meditation had produced an ecstatic condition in which he so overwhelmingly felt the presence of God that he was unable to complete his obligatory prayers. The Hajji died on 14 Safar 1039/3 October 1629.<sup>2</sup>

Many of Miyan-Mir's disciples had been outstanding scholars before becoming mystics and hermits. Mulla Ibrahim Ruhj (d. 1025/1616-17) was a distinguished '*alim*' and a keen traveller who rejected these pursuits as well as those of theology after being initiated by the Miyan. He became extremely popular in the areas around Mewat and Narnol, spreading the spiritual influence of Miyan-Mir in these regions. Of Mulla Ruhi's disciples, Safaru'd-Din and Natha Paracha were also eminent sufis of high stature, but in order to avoid fame they indulged in trade and commerce.<sup>3</sup>

Another notable scholar, Mulla Khwaja Kalan, who came from around Lahore, was also one of Miyan-Mir's disciples. Mulla Khwaja's meditation had given him an insight into the condition of reward or punishment meted out to dead bodies in graves. He also died before his *pir*.<sup>4</sup>

Mulla 'Abdu'l-Ghafur was an eminent '*alim*' and teacher in Lahore. He began practising devotional exercises which were taught to him by another of the Miyan's disciples. Receiving scant attention from the Mir himself he became so dejected that he resolved to wear the Brahmanical thread, paint his forehead like a Brahman and move into the bazaar to live side by side with Hindus. Although outwardly his appearance

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 134-40.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 143.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 144-45.



was that of a Muslim, he said inwardly he was an infidel. Discipleship under Miyan-Mir would have made him into a Muslim but as he could not achieve such a status he would therefore reconcile his outward form with his internal condition. The disciple who had instructed 'Abdu'l-Ghafur related this to the Miyan who relented and accepted him into his discipleship. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Ghafur died during the Miyan's lifetime.<sup>1</sup>

Another former 'alim, Mulla Hamid Gujar, became Miyan-Mir's disciple only a year before the latter's death. Before he became a sufi he was also one of the famous teachers of Lahore and at the height of his career his main preoccupation had been with accumulating wealth and criticising Miyan-Mir. However he experienced a sudden inward change, and he decided to renounce the world, his family and teaching to adopt the sufi life under the Miyan. This happened only seven months before his death on 17 Ramazan 1044/5 March 1635.<sup>2</sup>

Hajji Salih Kashmiri was also a disciple of Miyan-Mir, but his more advanced spiritual training was entrusted by Miyan-Mir to his distinguished disciple, Mulla-Shah,<sup>3</sup> whose life we shall be discussing presently. When the Hajji finally became Miyan-Mir's disciple he was already fifty years old. Once when his *pir* mentioned to him that people with strong sexual appetites were destined for great mystical heights, being called on to exercise a high degree of self-control, the Hajji began to consult doctors to raise his libido. Soon after his *pir's* death he himself died and was buried just outside the dome of Miyan-Mir's tomb.<sup>4</sup>

A number of Miyan-Mir's leading disciples did survive him, penetrating into various parts of the sub-continent. Mulla Khwaja Bihari, who, after the Miyan's death, became famous in Lahore had come from Hajjipur (Patna). The quest for higher learning had brought him to Lahore where he began to live with Mulla-Fazil and to study under him. In accordance with Miyan-Mir's traditions, most of his ascetic experiences were in the jungle and his other moments were devoted to becoming a compendium of esoteric knowledge and practice. Regularly he would eat the remains of the betel-nut which had been spat out by his *pir*, believing this would result in proficiency in Qur'anic exegesis, *Hadis* and such advanced sufi texts as the *Fusus al-Hikam*, *Lam'at* of 'Iraqi and *Lawa'ih* of Jami.

According to Dara-Shukoh, the Mulla gave several subtle explanations of sufi truth. He commented on this verse by Sana'i

'You are keen to attend the assemblies of the religious sermon,  
Oh sermon deliverer, to you the death of the neighbour is more than  
sufficient.'

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 148-49.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 142.

<sup>3</sup>*infra*, pp. 116-25.

<sup>4</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 146-47.



as follows. His interpretation was that 'neighbour' meant parts of the body (eyes, ears, hands and feet) which in maturity became weakened. The verse called on the heart to learn a lesson from this feebleness and remain vigilant.

On one occasion, to the dismay of those present, the Mulla gave a miraculous demonstration of what he understood to be the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. In the middle of winter he and a number of sufi friends were gathered around a fire. A well-known mystic from Lahore called Mahmud asked Mulla-Khwaja for his ideas on the *Unity of Being*. Instantly the Mulla jumped into the fire asserting that his action could be identified with the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He remained there for some time without even his clothes being singed. When he rejoined the group, people rushed up to him, tearing off every shred of clothing. This was the way he explained the *Wahdat al-Wujud* verbally.

'If people address me "Oh ! Prince of Saints, Oh ! Mulla-Khwaja, Oh ! Shaikh-Wali (Great Shaikh)"; I am not pleased with the praise. Later if people say, "Oh ! infidel; Oh ! Jew;" I do not feel abused or become angry".'

A gifted conversationalist, Mulla-Khwaja would sometimes lapse into an ecstatic state while talking. A bachelor, he did not teach disciples. The exact date of his death is unknown.<sup>1</sup>

A student of Mulla 'Abdu's-Salam Mufti of Lahore and a class-mate of Dara-Shukoh's teacher, Shaikh Mirak, Shaikh Muhammad Lahori was reported also to have been a teacher of great fame in Lahore and to have acquired a perfect knowledge of the exoteric sciences. Mysticism prompted Shaikh Muhammad to relinquish his career as an '*alim*', dispose of his book collection and seek Miyan-Mir as *pir*. The Shaikh's newly-acquired asceticism prompted his *pir* to show concern for the welfare of the Shaikh's family and he would always offer them a portion of his own gifts of food as well as *futuh* (unsolicited gifts). Miyan-Mir gave special tuition to the Shaikh up until his death. Before he died the Miyan summoned the Shaikh from the jungle and instructed him in a number of the particularly esoteric teachings of sufism. He also refused publicly to express his views on the Unity of Being, which according to him implied the following:

'In the beginning of his sufi journey, the neophyte is a drop of water in the ocean, who feels he has been transformed into a pearl. When he becomes perfect and attains *fana'*, he loses his identity as a pearl and returns to his early state as a drop of water annihilating himself into the ocean (Being). Another example is ice. When water coagulates it is called ice but when it melts and as water flows into the ocean it again loses its identity. There is no way that melted ice

<sup>1</sup>*Sak inatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 205-08.



(as an entity) can be reassembled. The final state of sufi perfection is like this; there is a situation in which the sufi's individual existence is effaced and he is nothing but Ocean.<sup>1</sup>

Miyan Hajji Muhammad Banyani, another of Miyan-Mir's disciples, had been a soldier as well as a petty *mansabdar*. Although he habitually followed Chishtiyya practices he steadily became more unsatisfied with his spiritual progress. After approaching Miyan-Mir for guidance he began accompanying his new *pir* and his disciples into the surrounding groves. In a relatively short time he had achieved his goal. A mystical poet, he expressed his ideas with great sensitivity and emotion. His death occurred on 7 Ramazan 1054/7 November 1644.<sup>2</sup>

One of Miyan-Mir's most senior disciples was Shaikh Ahmad of Sunnam in the Panjab. Formerly an '*alim* of some standing, as a sufi he rarely wore a cloak, preferring only the ascetic loin-cloth and a shawl over his shoulders. Adopting the life of Indian faqirs, he withdrew into the forest and refused offerings of food from visitors, keeping a piece of dry bread tied in one corner of his shawl. When offered food he would bite a morsel of his bread saying that he had eaten and still had some left. Only food offered from his *pir* was acceptable to him. He continued the life of a qalandar until his death on 11 Sha'ban 1059/20 August 1649.<sup>3</sup>

One of Shaikh Ahmad Sunnami's friends who also shared Miyan-Mir as a *pir* was Delhi's Shaikh Ahmad. The son of one of the town's rich and prominent families he acquired an impressive knowledge of Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus al-Hikam* and the *Futuh al-Makkiyya*. Shaikh Ahmad divided his time between the Kangra hills and Delhi. He also managed to lecture on the *Fusus* and the *Futuh*, and instructed Dara-Shukoh on a portion of the *Fusus*. As well as being an expert archer, the Shaikh was well acquainted with medicine.<sup>4</sup>

Another leading personality among the Miyan's disciples was Miyan Abu'l-Ma'ali. Unlike his peers who strictly adhered to the rules of the *Shari'a*, Miyan Abu'l-Ma'ali was a *malamati*, and in order to conceal his spiritual attainments he recklessly and openly violated the laws of the *Shari'a*. Although his *pir* was concerned with his disciple's lifestyle, he was so impressed by his spirituality that he ignored it.

Miyan Abu'l-Ma'ali grew up and was educated in Bhira where his father was a *qazi*. Under the spell of spiritual ecstasy, like many sufis he left his entire property to his wife and children, while he went to Lahore for mystical instruction. Except for the '*ulama*' class, an overwhelming section of the population of that city soon came to believe in Miyan Abu'l-Ma'ali's spiritual greatness. Whenever he was in a good mood,

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya*, pp. 209-11.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 212-14.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 216-17.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 218-19.



according to Dara-Shukoh, the Miyan would expound certain subtle points of the *Tawhid* and the Absolute. A poet who specialized in verses of the emotional, ecstatic genre, he also wrote a commentary on some twenty verses in Rumi's *Masnawi*.

In his preface of this, Miyan Abu'l-Ma'ali asserted that older commentaries on the *Masnawi* were few and that the more recent versions violated the true spirit of the technical terms used by sufis. Commenting on a Rumi's verse defining a sufi, the Miyan wrote that 'a sufi fettered by the restrictions of time and condition, is the son of time. If he ignores both the present and future worlds he becomes the father' (that is, master) of time. Time in the sufic world-view of Rumi relates to the mystic's disregard for the theophanic image (*tajalli*) par excellence in the world of images ('*alam-i misal*'). Abu'l-Ma'ali believed that for a sufi the '*alam-i misal*' (an intermediary stage between the body and the spirit) is identified with a similar stage between the '*alam-i shahada*' (the physical domain of sensorial existence) and the '*alam-i malakut*' (the angelic kingdom). As a human being the sufi depends on the body for his physical existence and on his spirit for light and illumination. In the sufi's heart theophanic images shed a peculiar type of light due to his spiritual perception. In this state the sufi perceives the limitless Primordial Light, not a mixed or limited light.

In this commentary Abu'l-Ma'ali also dealt with the significance of love. Of God's one thousand names, a lone world in *Zat* (Essence), while the rest are grouped under either *Jamal* (Beauty) or *Jalal* (Majesty). As *Jamal* and *Jalal* cannot be conceived to co-exist, it is evident that the Essence is concealed somewhere beyond the limitations of attributes relating to *Jamal* and *Jalal*. The two aspects of Divine Majesty and beauty are in a constant state of flux. As an example God can be perceived through using the following analogy. On his right is a pool of water and on His left a connecting underground channel of fire. If one plunges into the fire, one emerges through the connecting channel into water and *vice versa*. The holy and unknowable Essence is interlinked with both *Jamal* and *Jalal*. No moment intervenes between this interchange. Accordingly the sufi perceives God in the physical sphere through both *Jamal* and *Jalal*.

The realization of *coincidentia oppositorum* also called on the sufi to perceive the One in the many as the final stage of spiritual knowledge. Only a profound spiritualist, freed from all attachment to the mystery, could understand Self-manifestation or Self-limitation. Abu'l-Ma'ali then quoted some of Rumi's verses which challenged the belief of the Mu'tazila<sup>1</sup> sect that a vision of the Absolute was impossible. He states

<sup>1</sup>A sunni sect which created the speculative dogmatics of Islam founded by Wasil bin 'Ata' (80/699-131/748-49) and 'Amr bin 'Ubaid (d. 145/762). They were separated from their teacher, Hasan of Basra, completely rejected ideas relating to any resemblance between Allah and his creatures, and asserted that Divine attributes were



that Rumi was of the opinion that the Mu'tazila attempted to understand such phenomena through their own physical experience and failed to understand the fact that vision and spiritual insight were not separate entities, and that apparent contradictions were synthesized in Being. The esoteric eye, brightened by the *ma'rifa* and a perception of the Unity of Being sees, hears and knows nothing but God. The materialism of the Mu'tazila only prevented them from appreciating the foundation of the Sunni belief in the vision of God.

Abu'l-Ma'ali concluded his commentary by underlining the importance of Divine love. He states that both Fir'aun (Pharaoh) and al-Hallaj cried *Ana'l-Haqq* ('I am Truth'). Fir'aun's cry was not founded on Divine love, consequently it remained an empty boast and a proof of his infidelity and ultimately led to his downfall. On the other hand, al-Hallaj's cry was uttered in a genuine state of ecstasy and spiritual intoxication in *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*), a mysterious spiritual state leading to the union of a spark of light with Primordial Light.<sup>1</sup>

Among the senior disciples who gathered around Miyan-Mir was Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghani. He built a small cell near his *pir's* tomb so that he could care for it with great devotion and served as guide to those visiting it. Whenever Dara-Shukoh visited the tomb of Miyan-Mir, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghani would discuss spiritual matters with the Prince. The Shaikh died on 17 Zu'l-hijja 1057/13 January 1648.<sup>2</sup>

Miyan Muhammad Murad, another disciple of Miyan-Mir, was the son of the celebrated Mulla 'Abdu's-Salam. Overpowered by a desire to become Miyan-Mir's disciple, Miyan Muhammad Murad resigned his post as *qazi* and distributed his property to beggars. He also enthusiastically performed severe devotional exercises. He urged those whom he allowed to call on him to renounce the world. Constantly in tears, he would often give recitations of the verses of Hafiz Shirazi.<sup>3</sup>

A Saiyid, 'Abdu'r-Rahman Mirza Madari was among the Miyan's favourite disciples, serving him faithfully for fourteen years. He made an interesting revelation to Dara-Shukoh regarding one aspect of the Miyan's instructions. He told the Prince that at the beginning of his mystical career Miyan-Mir had advised him to meditate in the jungle. He also suggested that he take food with him for he believed hunger took the mind away from God and that the lips of the carnal self, which according to sufi traditions was comparable to the filthy and lowly dog, should be sealed with a morsel of bread. Nevertheless he emphasized the

identical with His Being. They also interpreted the anthropomorphisms in the Qur'an allegorically and denied the beatific vision. According to them all human actions were dependent upon man's free will and God was not responsible for them.

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya*, pp. 220-34.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 236-37.



boundless spiritual benefits associated with food deprivation. In compliance with his *pir's* instructions the Saiyid did take some food with him but invariably dispensed it to beggars. Dara-Shukoh believed Miyan-Mir's instructions were based on the Prophet Muhammad's practice of carrying food with him to the Hira cave where he meditated.

(According to 'Abdu'r-Rahman, Miyan-Mir encouraged his disciples continually to visit other spiritualists and to learn from their teachings.)<sup>1</sup>

Brief accounts of four other disciples of the Miyan's were also given by Dara-Shukoh in his *Sakinatu'l-auliya*; they were Mulla Muhammed Sharif,<sup>2</sup> Mulla Abu Bakr,<sup>3</sup> Mulla 'Isa Siyalkoti<sup>4</sup> and Saiyid Ashraf.<sup>6</sup> Mulla Muhammad Sharif and Mulla 'Isa Siyalkoti were initiated by Miyan-Mir on the same day. Both habitually visited their *pir* together and later acquired a degree of <sup>ascetic</sup> perfection. Mulla Muhammad Sharif settled in Ruhtas, on the road to Kabul, and Mulla 'Isa Siyalkoti lived alternately in Lahore and Siyalkot.

Mulla Abu Bakr was also a disciple of Dara's *pir*, Mulla-Shah. Impelled by the desire to become a sufi, Mulla Abu Bakr gave away all his books to become Miyan-Mir's disciple. The Miyan transferred him to the care of Mulla-Shah. He died in 1049/1639 near Lahore. Saiyid Ashraf was a regular visitor to Miyan-Mir and was present during the visit of Shah-jahan. He died on 24 Zu'lq'ada 1024/15 December 1615.

The most prominent of all the Miyan's disciples was the celebrated *pir* of Prince Dara-Shukoh, who was generally known as Mulla-Shah. Although his name was Shah Muhammad, Miyan-Mir referred to him as Muhammed Shah and his friends and disciples called him Hazrat Akhwund (Revered Teacher). His disciples also believed that he had received from God the title *Lisanu'llah* (Tongue of Allah). The son of a village teacher, Akhwund Mulla 'Abdi (or 'Abd Muhammad) of the village of Arkasa'i, a suburb of Rustaq in Badakhshan, according to the *Ahwal-i Shahi* he was born in 992/1584. He was first educated in his own village, and then at the age of twenty-one migrated to Balkh for training in theology and to acquire further knowledge of Arabic. His next move was to Srinagar in Kashmir, his home for the next three years. During this time he became more and more interested in mysticism.<sup>6</sup> By the age of twenty-seven he had perfected the practice of asceticism.

Having heard of Miyan-Mir while *en route* to Lahore, he was dissuaded from going to see him by a friend who argued that Agra boasted of a

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya*, pp. 238-39.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 243.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 244.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 245.

<sup>6</sup>Tawakkul Beg Kaulabi, *Nauskha-i ahwal-i Shahi*, (British Museum MS.), ff. 4b-5b.



more eminent sufi. However he became disappointed with the Agra mystic. About 1023/1614-15 he returned to Lahore where he settled permanently, finding in Miyan-Mir his perfect *pir*.

For three years Miyan-Mir ignored his pupil until one day, after discovering that Mulla-Shah lived in a mosque, he demanded that he lodge elsewhere and ordered him to cease eating bazaar bread, his only source of food. This resulted in near starvation. Mulla-Shah having come through this trial stage with flying colours, Miyan-Mir now instructed him in a series of mystical exercises. Later his teaching was given in a symbolic form by hand gestures and pointing to objects. Finally Mulla-Shah reached a stage of illumination in which he recognized that all his earlier mystical experiences had only been leading up to this level. He went on perfecting the control of his self until he felt that all stages of Divine mystery were reflected in him. Although he had never written a single line suddenly he felt an urge to write poetry. Impressed by Mulla-Shah's mystical exercises, Miyan-Mir praised him lavishly.<sup>1</sup>

In 1038/1628-29 Mulla-Shah moved to Srinagar to reside at Hari Parbat near the Kashmir Fort. The hermitage commanded an excellent view and the serene atmosphere promoted Mulla-Shah to pour out his heart in mystical poetry. In view of his origins in the mountains of Badakhshan, Miyan-Mir permitted him to stay in Srinagar during the summer and to spend the winters with him in Lahore.

During this period in his life Mulla-Shah was engrossed in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to such an extent that his utterances while in ecstatic states began to match those of Bayazid and Hallaj. Although Miyan-Mir ordered him to restrain himself (which he attempted to do), in 1044/1634 the court 'ulama' persuaded Emperor Shahjahan to sentence Mulla-Shah to death for blasphemy. Dara-Shukoh, who later became the Mulla's disciple, advised the Emperor to postpone the order until he had consulted Miyan-Mir. Friends advised Mulla-Shah to migrate via Tibet to Kashghar. However the threat was ignored. Death would fulfil his mission, he said. The Miyan's intervention caused the decision to be cancelled, but through it Dara-Shukoh first became interested in the man who was later to become his *pir*.<sup>2</sup>

Miyan-Mir was singularly proud of Mulla-Shah and prophesied that the Qadiriyya order and his own brand of spiritual discipline would gain fame through Mulla-Shah.<sup>3</sup> However Mulla-Shah continued in his self-mortification. In his house nothing was ever cooked and his lamp remained unlit. As a celibate, he was never required to bathe formally for ceremonial uncleanness. This dispensation was claimed by him on the grounds that as loss of sperm occurred only in sexual intercourse and

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 154, 162-63.

<sup>2</sup>*Nuskha-i ahwal-i Shahi*, ff. 28a-30b.

<sup>3</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 168.



during sleep he remained unpolluted.<sup>1</sup> The Mulla also claimed never to have missed obligatory prayers even when in ill health.

After his evening prayers Mulla-Shah would practice breath control (*habs-i nafs*) until morning, while performing *zikhri khafi* (mental recollection). During the day the same process was repeated. In winter also he performed this exercise during the day<sup>2</sup> in the snow-covered garden. Between breaths the sweat on his body would freeze. Determined not to exhale until the perspiration from his body flowed freely he would inhale once more and the sweat would liquidize.<sup>3</sup> Such severe exercises failed to undermine his health and at the age of fifty-seven or fifty-eight Dara-Shukoh reported that his face still showed the freshness of youth.<sup>4</sup>

Some of Miyan-Mir's disciples complained of the 'easy' course of training given by Mulla-Shah to his disciples. In a letter to his *pir* Mulla-Shah asked for direction in designing a course of instruction for disciples. If the Miyan desired it, he would even refrain from training disciples altogether, he added. His *pir* rejected the offer, replying that he should continue teaching and was free either to make sufi life easy or austere for his disciples.<sup>5</sup> An example of Mulla-Shah's method of teaching was that used with Dara-Shukoh. He explained the secrets of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in a simple way and asked him to indulge in the *habs-i nafs* after performing his 'isha (night prayers). Throughout the night Dara-Shukoh would inhale and exhale only twice.<sup>6</sup>

In a letter to Dara-Shukoh's elder sister, Jahan-Ara, which was also intended for the Prince, the Mulla gave this explanation of the Unity of Being.

'The ocean which is all-embracing is not affected by the loss of a single drop of water. In the same way the universe is constituted of earth, heaven, God's throne and footstool, as well as millions of other objects between the heavens and earth. In this vast universe if an ant's leg were to be damaged it would have no effect on the rest of the universe. In relation to the limitless and unbounded *Wujud* (Being) and to the inconceivable Lord. . . all great things of the universe amount to the leg of an ant being bounded by limit and determination. The greatest attribute of the Being is Infinity as it affirms that it transcends all finite limitations. This proves that all objects of whatever size in relation to the Infinite Being are 'adam (non-existent). All believers and non-believers, as well as paradise and hell are forms of limited objects. The pleasures of paradise promised to the believers and the pains of hell for others are not limitless and as such make no impact on the Infinite and unknow-

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 157-58.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 167-68.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 159.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 156.



able Being. Reality transcends all. The ignorant discuss the question of *Wujud* with the sufi saints only because of their obscurantism, for they have not cast their glance on the Infinite and unknowable Being and are unaware of the fact that whatever sufis say is reinforced by the *Shari'a*. The *Shari'a* of which the critics boast, they themselves don't understand. They are thoughtless and deny their own God. They fail to realize that the highest aspect of the *Shari'a* is dependent on the acquisition of knowledge of the Unity of Being and the sight of Allah. Only the noblest of the spiritualists know about the Infinite who created the prophets and the saints. It may be noted that eminent spiritualists do have in mind that aspect of the *Shari'a* which is known as the *Haqiqa*. It is rightly said that the *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa* are also the stages of the *Shari'a*. Externalists concern themselves only with the first aspect of spiritual development; sufis confine themselves to the stage of the *Tariqa*. The perfect among mystics seek to achieve the *Haqiqa*, identified with the final goal. Only those who perceive the true significance of the Absolute (divested of His attributes) reach their final goal. The attainment of this final stage prompted Bayazid, Hallaj, Shaikh Junaid and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir to make ecstatic utterances identifying themselves with Reality. To these great proteges who annihilated their own 'selves' into the unknowable Infinite and Absolute and identified themselves with the Absolute Being, whatever God had taught was meant to be understood and not merely talked about. This fact was to be spiritually realized, not only discussed. As not every one could understand the truth of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, eminent sufis did not initiate every layman into a system of devotional exercises. Discussions relating to the status of believer and unbeliever should be the prerogative of the ignorant. You (Jahan-Ara and Dara-Shukoh) should know your own selves and your own statuses. Your paradise is the Divine Essence and your hell is separation from Him. Your paradise is eternal and will never be lost. . . . The blessings from the perception of the Essence are not available to all leading sufis, let alone to the common people. Those who claim to have rejected the theory of the Unity of Being used to debate this point. Now they understand the truth. However without a *pir* it is very difficult for their hearts to perceive this truth. In short, they do not possess what they claim; whatever they have got, they borrowed from us'.<sup>1</sup>

To Mulla-Shah the true faith was gnosticism and the perception of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The reference to worship in the Qur'anic verse 'I created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship Me',<sup>2</sup> was

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 186-89.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, LI, 56.



not to mechanical forms of worship but to the spiritual perception of God.<sup>1</sup> He divided the faith of Islam into three categories; that followed by the common people, by the élite and by the chosen among this élite. The first involved obedience to the injunctions contained in the following verse of the Qur'an.

So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet who can neither read nor write (*ummi*), who believeth in Allah and in His words, and follow him that haply ye may be led aright.<sup>2</sup>

The faith of the élite was complete only when the theophanic image of one of the Divine attributes was reflected in the devotee's heart and all his limbs were obedient to that theophanic image; that of the choicest among the élite depended on the total disappearance of egoism, then the theophanic image of the Essence was reflected in the heart, dulling the perception of physical feelings. The invitation of the Qur'an to embrace faith, according to Mulla-Shah, referred to the faith of the spiritual élite and the choicest amongst the sufis. The latter, the protégés of God, are called on to promote interest in the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*), and to bring to life dead hearts and weary souls.<sup>3</sup> Mulla-Shah considered these achievements the highest form of miracle and urged that the self should abandon its forgetfulness and the habit of seeing anything besides God. Frequently he would recite this *rubai* he had written himself.

I relate the story of '*irfan*' (gnosis), please listen,

Listen to it transcending the thoughts of Islam and faith.

What you possess you wrongly consider '*irfan*', you have no faith,

The faith is '*irfan*'; listen O Muslims.<sup>4</sup>

Mulla-Shah did not agree with the sufi theory that devotional exercises should not be taught to the old and the blind. He believed this idea violated the promise contained in the Qur'an, 'Pray unto me and I will hear your prayer'.<sup>5</sup> As a test case Mulla-Shah decided to exercise his spiritual influence by converting a sixty-year old Hindu. The man received the faith miraculously through the powers of the Mulla, without any prior knowledge. After performing the devotional exercises which had been given to him by the Mulla he became an '*arif*' (gnostic).

According to Dara-Shukoh, Mulla-Shah was endowed with powers whereby he could make gnostics of the young, the old, the Muslim and the infidel, without asking them to perform any ascetic exercises or undergo any forms of mortification or renunciation. He advocated that every individual had an innate capacity for gnosticism which he believed they should use. Dara-Shukoh believed his own spiritual progress was due to

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 170.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, VII, 158.

<sup>3</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 170-73.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 171.

<sup>5</sup>*Qur'an*, XL, 60



Mulla-Shah's contemplation and meditation.<sup>1</sup>

Although proselytization was not Mulla-Shah's life's mission it would seem that his spiritual influence led Srinagar's Hindus and Shi'is to embrace Sunnism and also gnosticism. According to Dara-Shukoh, many Shi'is and Hindus who merely passed the Mulla's house would suddenly renounce their own faiths to become Sunnis. The people of Srinagar believed that the Shi'is who walked in front of Mulla-Shah's house could miraculously see the Prophet and the *Khulfa-i Rashidun*. As it was also believed that this often prompted them to embrace Sunnism, Shi'is would choose other routes to avoid his house.<sup>2</sup>

In 1057/1647-48 Mulla-Shah composed a commentary in Persian called the *Shah Tafsir* on Chapters I, II, III and XII of the Qur'an. The orthodox Sher Khan Lodi sneered at the ideas contained in the exegeses of these chapters<sup>3</sup> but the Mulla's intellectual exercise marks the culmination of mystical interpretations started by such Qur'anic commentators as 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Musa al-Sulami of Nishapur (d. 412/1021), al-Qushairi (d. 465/1072), Abu Muhammad Ruzbihan bin Nasr al-Baqli (d. 606/1209) and Najmu'd-Din Abu Bakr ('Abdu'llah bin Muhammad al-Asadi al-Razi, known as Dayah d. 656/1258).

Mulla-Shah ends his commentary on the first Qur'anic chapter, the *Fatiha* (Opening) with the statement that sufis endowed with intuitive power and esoteric perception firmly believed men represented not only the epitome of what was contained in the Qur'an in general, but of every single verse. Everything in the universe, whether a part of a whole, a particle of the sun, a drop of water or an ocean, were endowed with an ideal and angelic form. Everything descended from the world of pure spirits to the physical world, in order to be perfected and then to be able to return to its original Divine home.<sup>4</sup>

In his comments of Verse 3, Chapter II,<sup>5</sup> Mulla-Shah divided *salat* (prayer) into three types. The prayers which were obligatory five times daily came under the *Shari'a*, the prayer for followers of the *Tariqa* was the *pas-i anfas* (control of the breath) and that for the third of those who had attained *Haqiqa* amounted to making one's physical existence vanish.<sup>6</sup>

Explaining another verse he categorized people without any spiritual sensitivity as *kafirs* (infidels), and those enraptured by contemplation of the Beloved as *mu'min* (believers).<sup>7</sup> Of another verse, the Shah observed

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya*, pp. 169-70.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 160.

<sup>3</sup>Sher Khan Lodi, *Mir'atu'l-khayal*, Bombay, 1324/1906, pp. 199-201.

<sup>4</sup>*Shah-i Tafsir*, India Office, Delhi Persian, f. 276a.

<sup>5</sup>Who believe in the unseen, and establish worship (*yuqimun as-salat*), and spend of that we have bestowed upon them.

<sup>6</sup>*Shah-i Tafsir*, f. 277b.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, pp. 280b, 281a.



that only those who wholehearted believed in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were true gnostics; conversely they were *mulhids* (unbelievers) who spoke only about unity in a traditional manner and did not have a true perception of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>1</sup>

Mulla-Shah's deep sensitivity about what he thought of as real infidelity was reflected in his voluminous *masnawis*, *ghazals* and *rubai's*. He did not deal with those subjects in conventional poetic language but thoughtfully explained them in the *rubai's* contained in his own commentaries. Here is a good example.

*Ruba'i by Mulla-Shah*

Came the *Wahdat*, its arrival is timely;

The felicity of its footsteps is a source of confusion to the worship of  
multiplicity.

The incomplete faith is completed by infidelity,

This interchangeability is a matter of gratification as is the substitute.

*Commentary by Mulla-Shah*

Oh believer! The *kafir* who has perceived the Reality and recognized it (which is the acme of faith) is a believer (*mu'min*). Conversely the believer (*mu'min*) who has not perceived the Reality and has not recognized it is an infidel. This shows that the spiritual élite see a believer and unbeliever differently. Blessed are those who have seen the *kafir-i mu'min* (believer-infidel) and have obtained the essence of faith through such an infidelity; the loser is one who has not met this type of *kafir*. Whatever is general knowledge and belief is commonplace and imperfect. Perfection is something different. Similarly '*ishq* (love) and '*irfan* (gnosticism) differ; everyone is found submerged in the ocean of love but love undoubtedly reminds one of dualism. '*Irfa*n involves a transcendence of the dichotomy between 'I' and 'You'. It is easy for an iconoclast to smash idols but the destruction of 'ego' depends on a deeply rooted spirituality. This attribute is not acquired through personal effort but by Divine grace.<sup>2</sup>

Mulla-Shah's correspondence also confirms the ideas contained in his poetry and the commentary. In a letter he stated that swords and stones were intended to destroy human beings: The belief that swords and stones did not harm gnostics and spiritualists was a myth. He and others like him who had received a correct perception of Reality would never dare depart from the laws of the *Shari'a* and, moreover, they refused to waste their time in showing off their miraculous feats. To Mulla-Shah, *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa* were all different stages of the *Shari'a*, itself and it was because of this that he advocated an obedience to the Holy

<sup>1</sup>*Shah-i Tafsir*, p. 288.

<sup>2</sup>*Masnawi Mulla-Shah* (India Office MS.) f. 119b.



Law. He summed up his teachings in the remark that sufis who concentrated their attention on Essence did not involve themselves in the differences between *mu'min* and *kafir*, heaven and hell, reward and punishment; whereas the ignorant would probably indulge in these frivolous questions. Sufis should seek to recognize themselves and their own status and, if this were achieved, they would realize that their heaven was a dedication to the Essence.<sup>1</sup>

From his earliest days as an outstanding sufi *pir* Mulla-Shah took no interest in initiating disciples, believing his mission was not to establish a 'shop of sufism' where discipleships were sold. He was also opposed to the construction of a *khanqah* of his own, preferring to sleep in a small house at night and spend his days in the jungle. Reluctantly, however, he did acquire a number of disciples gathered from Kashmir, Kabul and Badakhshan.

In 1049/1639-40 the Emperor Shahjahan visited Srinagar and stayed in the palace built in the Zafabad gardens. Respectfully the Emperor invited Mulla-Shah to visit him and give him spiritual guidance. Initially Mulla-Shah refused, saying that worldly rulers were unable to benefit from such training, but later, however, he relented. He imparted to the Emperor a definition of the '*ilm al-yaqin*, '*ayn al-yaqin* and *haqq al-yaqin* through an analogy. He had heard that there was a king called Shahjahan who ruled over the Panjab, the Deccan and Bengal. Although he had never seen him himself this form of knowledge was '*ilm al-yaqin* (certainty gained through knowledge). A personal sighting of the Emperor would be '*ayn al-yaqin* (certainty gained through perception) and the ability to converse with him would be *haqq al-yaqin* (certainty based on truth).<sup>2</sup>

The same year Prince-Dara Shukoh and his sister Jahan-Ara became Mulla-Shah's disciples. According to Tawakkul Beg Kaulabi, one evening the Prince called at the Shah's house incognito and accompanied by only one servant. The Shah was seated on a platform which he had built for himself under a plane tree near his house. Leaving his servant outside the Prince walked in and over to the platform and calmly stood behind the Shah. After a short time the Shah asked him his name, the visitor replied "Dara-Shukoh", and on request also gave the name of his father. However, when the Prince asked to become a disciple the Shah was angered and the Prince was ordered in no uncertain terms to leave his presence. Dara was so disappointed that, according to the story, he wept for an entire evening. The same performance was repeated the following night and again the Prince was rejected. The Prince then befriended some of the Mulla's favourites who became intermediaries. Their recommendations moved the Mulla and Dara-Shukoh was finally accepted as a *murid*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Masnawi Mulla-Shah, f. 248b.

<sup>2</sup>Nuskha-i ahwal-i Shahi, f. 37b.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, f. 38b-40b.



Jahan-Ara's letters also deeply impressed Mulla-Shah, and he decided to initiate her too.<sup>1</sup>

The Prince assigned stipends to some disciples of Mulla-Shah, and took Tawakkul-Beg, who formerly served the Prince Shah-Shuja', into his entourage. Some sufis, however, such as Hafiz Turk 'Ali, refused to accept financial assistance from the Prince.<sup>2</sup> In 1054/1644-45 the Emperor Shahjahan, accompanied by his harem and Dara-Shukoh again visited Srinagar, and in response to repeated invitations from the Emperor, Mulla-Shah called on him again. Prince Dara-Shukoh also took the opportunity to call frequently on his *pir*. Tawakkul-Beg became a 'go-between' for messages and correspondence between Mulla-Shah, Dara-Shukoh and Jahan-Ara.<sup>3</sup>

In 1055/1645-46 the celebrated gardens, the Cashma-i Shahi, were completed in Srinagar. Mulla-Shah renamed them Cashma-i Sahiba (*Sahiba* Springs) after Jahan-Ara whose title was Begam Sahiba.<sup>4</sup> However it is the original name which has survived to this day..

The following year at the Emperor's invitation Mulla-Shah visited Lahore as a royal guest.<sup>5</sup> In 1057/1647-48 Jahan-Ara ordered a mosque and a *khanqah* built for Mulla-Shah at the foot of the Koh-Maran hills in Srinagar. On its completion five years later the Mulla composed a chronogram in which he mentioned the date. The Emperor also visited the complex and performed his 'asr (afternoon) prayers in the mosque and later personally visited the Mulla's *khanqah*.<sup>6</sup>

In 1061/1650-51 Mulla-Shah laid out a garden with a house attached about four miles from Srinagar known as Be-Ham. Although the project was never completed an interesting beauty spot was added to the existing monuments in Kashmir.<sup>7</sup>

Both the Emperor and Dara-Shukoh continued to visit Mulla-Shah either in Kashmir or Lahore and the arrangements for the Mulla's stay in Lahore were invariably taken care of by the Emperor or Dara-Shukoh. In 1066/1655-56 the Emperor invited Mulla-Shah to visit Delhi but the Mulla's declining eyesight prevented him from doing so.<sup>8</sup>

After Dara-Shukoh's defeat by his younger brother, Aurangzib, in June 1658, the new Emperor launched an attack on the defeated Prince's friends and associates. Naturally Mulla-Shah was high on the black list and in 1069/1659 the Emperor ordered the governor of Kashmir to send him to Delhi.<sup>9</sup> Fortunately for the Mulla a serious illness prevented him from travelling for about a year. At the time of the grand coronation of the new Emperor (June-August 1659), Mulla-Shah

<sup>1</sup>*Nuskha-i ahwal-i Shahi*, f. 48a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 53a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 56b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 67b.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 74b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 33a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 56b.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, f. 59b.

<sup>8</sup>*ibid*, f. 72b.



unprompted<sup>1</sup> composed a *ruba'i* to commemorate the event and a number of his friends seized the opportunity to convince the Emperor of his sincere, deeply religious temperament. Jahan-Ara also wrote to her brother begging him to excuse the Mulla from undertaking the arduous journey to Delhi because of his ill health. Realizing the Shah could not be liquidated for violating the *Shari'a* and that the persecution of sufi believers in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was imprudent he took the more moderate course. However he continued to condemn Mulla-Shah for the grave indiscretion of discussing such an inflammatory theory as the *Wahdat al-Wujud* with his father, Shahjahan. To Aurangzib, as to sufis themselves, such ideas were only to be discussed in the private assemblies of advanced dervishes. As a parting thrust Aurangzib ordered Mulla-Shah to move to Lahore, within easy access of the court.

Finally, at the end of 1071/1660 Mulla-Shah abandoned his family and friends and moved to Lahore. There he lived in the house previously assigned to him by Shahjahan, where he withdrew from all company. Occasionally he would tactfully thank the Emperor for giving him the opportunity to meditate alone on the Unity of Being, arguing that Kashmir had presented continual obstacles to his meditation in the form of the demands of his family and friends. The Emperor allowed Tawakkul-Beg, whom he had posted to Kangra, to return to Mulla-Shah and serve him, while one of Jahan-Ara's servants was commissioned to care for the Mulla's personal comfort. Tawakkul-Beg related that under the spell of ecstasy Mulla-Shah exuberantly expressed his ideas on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, ignoring the advice of well-wishers to restrain himself and to adjust to the new political times. Invariably his reply would be that he had never shrouded his beliefs in secrecy, even committing them to paper and that he was unafraid of the consequences he might suffer in his remaining years. However he was not destined to live long and he died at Lahore on 15 Safar 1072/10 October 1661. He was buried in a plot he had bought near the tomb of Miyan-Mir. Jahan-Ara had a red sandstone tomb erected over the *pir's* grave, enlarged the site and added a beautiful garden.<sup>2</sup>

With the exception of Dara-Shukoh, Mulla-Shah had no really outstanding disciples and, as we know, discouraged potential ones. Tawakkul-Beg relates that Khwaja Khwurd, the son of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, requested Mulla-Shah to initiate him as a Qadiri, but that the Shah refused on the grounds that the Khwaja himself was the son of a great sufi and therefore he should not undergo the humility of being initiated into another *silsila*.<sup>3</sup> He reluctantly initiated Khwaja 'Abdu'l Wahhab, a descendant of Khwaja Dahbedi, an eminent Naqshbandi, as a Qadiriyya. Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Wahhab had migrated from Transoxiana to India only

<sup>1</sup>MRM, p. 366; *Nuskha-i Ahwai-i Shahi*, f. 74b.

<sup>2</sup>*Nuskha-i Ahwai-i Shahi*, ff. 75b-78a.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, ff. 64a-64b.



during the reign of Shahjahan and there he was given a mansab of 1,500.<sup>1</sup> Tawakkul-Beg's story seems to be mythical and was probably designed to impress on his readers the superiority of the Qadiriyya over the Naqshbandiyya. Another possible explanation of the interest of the eminent Naqshbandiyya in Mulla-Shah was the latter's growing influence with Emperor Shahjahan and Dara-Shukoh, although the Mulla himself never attached any importance to it at all.

About 1031/1622 Tawakkul-Beg became Mulla-Shah's disciple and the association continued for forty years. He was the son of a petty official of the Governor of Kashmir. Around 1053/1643-44 he was employed by Shah Shuja', the Governor of Bengal. In 1054/1644 Dara-Shukoh appointed him a *mansabdar* of 200 and go-between for himself and his *pir*, Mulla Shah, Hafiz Tark 'Ali from Kabul, another of Mulla Shah's disciples, was an ascetic and a fine calligrapher. In his spare moments he copied the works of Mulla-Shah. Hakim Masihu'z-Zaman, a Shi'i scholar, embraced Sunnism and became Mulla-Shah's disciple.<sup>2</sup>

One of the interesting personalities among Mulla-Shah's disciples was Banwali Das Wali, a former Hindu *munshi* (secretary) to Dara-Shukoh. A scholar, author and poet, he wrote a history of the Hindu rajas of Delhi from the time of Judhishtir to the invasion of Mu'izzu'd-Din Muhammad bin Sam, and gave a tabulated list of the subsequent Muslim rulers up to the Emperor Shahjahan. He also translated a Sanskrit drama, *Prabodha Chandraodaya*, into Persian called the *Gulzar-i Hal*. His *Diwan* of *ghazals* and *masnawis* was very popular and has been published. In his *Masnawi* he sensitively poured out his heart in a eulogy of his *pir*, Mulla-Shah, and his *silsila*. His *ghazals* portray the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in an emotional but moving fashion. After Aurangzib's accession to the throne Wali withdrew to the jungle which was the scene of his death in 1085/1674-75.<sup>3</sup>

(Mulla-Shah's associations with Dara-Shukoh had served to exacerbate orthodox hostility towards sufism, but this development failed to undermine Mulla-Shah's importance, both as a sufi and a poet. Aurangzib spent two-and-a-half months in Srinagar between May and August 1663 and is said to have visited the Be-Ham gardens and offered supererogatory prayers in the Mulla's former cell.<sup>4</sup> After Shahjahan's death early in 1666 Aurangzib became reconciled to Jahan-Ara, Dara-Shukoh's favourite sister and staunch supporter. Whatever bitterness the new Emperor had originally felt about Mulla-Shah's former connection with Dara-Shukoh must by this time have abated.

### Dara-Shukoh

We now turn to an outline of the early life and eventual involvement

<sup>1</sup>*Nuskha-i Ahwai-i Shahi*, ff. 33b-34a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 64b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, ff. 66a-b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 67b.



of Sultan Muhammad Dara-Shukoh, the eldest son and heir-apparent of Emperor Shahjahan, with the sufi movement. An assessment of his relationship with and significance to the Qadiriyya order, as well as his own writings on sufi teachings will also be made.

Dara-Shukoh was the eldest son of Emperor Shahjahan and his favourite wife Arjmand-Banu Begam. (Mumtaz-Mahall). By the time Shahjahan was twenty-four he had fathered three daughters, but no sons and in an action reminiscent of his grandfather, Akbar, prompted by his wish for a male heir, he prayed intensely at the shrine of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. Like Shahjahan, Dara-Shukoh came to believe that the Khwaja's blessing had been responsible for his birth.

This event took place near Sagartāl in Ajmir on 29 Safar 1024/30 March 1615.<sup>1</sup> The proud grandfather, then the reigning Jahangir, called the baby Dara-Shukoh ('Majestic as Darius').<sup>2</sup> Seven years later Shahjahan rebelled against his father and the child, Dara-Shukoh, along with his brothers, spent about three years fleeing with his parents from the Deccan through Bengal and Bihar. Early in 1626 Shahjahan surrendered, and under the terms of the subsequent treaty Dara and his brother, Aurangzib, were sent as hostages to the court in Delhi. It was only after Jahangir's death on 28 Safar 1037/8 November 1627 and the accession of Shahjahan to the throne on 8 Jumada II 1037/14 February 1628 that the two princes were brought to their parents by Abu'l-Hasan Asaf Khan, the elder brother of Nur-Jahan and the father of Dara's mother, Mumtaz-Mahall.<sup>3</sup>

Initially Dara-Shukoh's education was in the traditional mould so carefully designed for young Mughal princes. As well as receiving a literary and theological training, they were trained to a high degree of proficiency in warfare and administration. Dara-Shukoh's first religious teacher was Mulla 'Abdu'l-Latif from Sultanpur<sup>4</sup> in the Punjab, whom the young Prince failed to mention in his writings, instead referring with reverence to a later teacher, Mirak-Shaikh bin Shaikh Fasihu'd-Din. A scholar and ascetic, the Shaikh had received instruction from Miyan Mir<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 94.

<sup>2</sup>Abdu'l-Hamid Lahauri, *Padshah-nama*, I, Calcutta, 1866-72, p. 391. The letters in *Gul-i awwalin-i gulistan-i Shahi* (The Prime Rose in the Rose Garden) give the date of birth.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Salih Kamboh Lahauri *'Amal-i Salih*, Calcutta, 1912, pp. 225-31. The English merchants wrote on 2 March 1628 to the President and Council at Surat. Assuffe Caun is yesterday arrived with the three young princes, the king's sonnes, and divers other amrars'. William Foster, *The English Factories in India 1624-29*, Oxford, 1909, p. 247.

<sup>4</sup>Rahman 'Ali says that Mulla 'Abdu'l-Latif Sultanpuri was one of Aurangzib's teachers and an expert in both theological and rational sciences. He died in 1036/1626-27. Rahman 'Ali, *Tazkira-i 'ulama'-i Hind*, 2nd edition, Lucknow, 1914, p. 132; *Padshah-nama*, I, pp. 344-45.

<sup>5</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 31, 59, 209, 236, 243.



and was the first to interest the young Prince in sufism, later to become the overwhelming interest of his life. □

Dara-Shukoh's deep love and appreciation of art and beauty also made him an excellent calligrapher. There is no definite evidence to prove that 'Abdu'r-Rashid Daylami tutored Dara in this skill, but the resemblance between their respective styles is somewhat striking.

In Sha'ban 1042/February 1633 Prince Dara-Shukoh was married to Nadira Begum, the daughter of his uncle, Sultan Parviz. The proposal had been made by Dara's mother, Mumtaz Mahall. After her sudden death on 17 Zu'lqa'da 1040/17 June 1631 the gloom which filled the court and the sorrow of Shahjahan and his children were only relieved by celebrations for the wedding of Dara and his bride.<sup>1</sup>

In 1042/1633 Dara-Shukoh was given his first *mansab* (12,000/6,000) and assigned the lucrative *jagir* of Hisar-Firuz in the Punjab.<sup>2</sup> In 1055/1645 he became governor of Allahabad, in 1057/1647 of the Punjab, in 1059/1649 of Gujarat and in 1062/1652 of Multan and Kabul. But it was only Lahore where he remained for any length of time, the other provincial capitals being governed mainly by his deputies. The Punjab's lucrative revenues and strategic significance prompted Dara to retain it on a permanent basis among his possessions.

Dara-Shukoh soon proved himself to be singularly unskilled in the roles of commander and administrator. A poor judge of character and talent, he was both gullible and credulous. Nevertheless he continued to enjoy unlimited support from his doting father. His elder sister, Jahan-Ara Begum, who after the death of her mother was greatly cherished by Shahjahan and whose counsel he highly valued, also gave Dara-Shukoh her unstinted support. In 1067/1657 Emperor Shahjahan promoted Dara-Shukoh to the *mansab* of 60,000/40,000.

But it was Dara's fascination for mysticism and an irrevocable sense of his own destiny which hindered him from more assiduously preparing himself for the challenges and hazards which his role as heir-apparent presented. Upon ascertaining the extent of his weaknesses, particularly his lack of judgement, his three younger brothers began plotting against him, and when Shahjahan fell ill on 7 Zu'lhijja 1067/16 Sept. 1657, the inevitable war of succession between Mughal siblings erupted.

After two military defeats, firstly on 7 Ramazan 1068/8 June 1658 at Samugarh, near Agra, and again at Deora's near Ajmir on 28 Jumada 11/1069/23 March 1659, Dara, relentlessly pursued by Aurangzib's loyal Rajput general, Mirza Raja Jai Singh, first fled north of Ahmadabad and then decided to continue to Iran via Qandahar, a course which had proved so fruitful for the Emperor Humayun. In the middle of June 1659,

<sup>1</sup>*Padshah-nama*, I, pp. 453-59.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 541.



exhausted by the difficulties of the journey Nadira Begam, Dara's beloved wife died. With the loss of his companion through privation and disappointment, Dara-Shukoh's world collapsed. In an attempt to escape to Iran he naively entrusted himself to Malik-Jiwan, the perfidious Afghan whose life he had previously saved. In the hope of reward from Aurangzib, Malik Jiwan, who controlled the fort of Dadar near the Bolan Pass, handed over the unfortunate Dara and his younger son, Sipahr-Shukoh, to Mirza Raja Jai Singh.

After his capture and subsequent return to Delhi Dara-Shukoh and his son were paraded through the streets of the capital dressed in tattered garments and seated on a miserable-looking female elephant. An eye-witness (Bernier) noted that some of Delhi's citizens, while weeping at the humiliation heaped on their Prince, lamented that 'none offered to draw a sword, with a view to delivering the beloved and compassionate prince.' A group whom the official court historian termed 'dissolutes and vagabonds' however, as well as some supporters of Dara were so moved by Aurangzib's cruelty to his elder brother that they did attack some of Jiwan's Afghans, successfully wounding a number. Also, women were reported to have dumped garbage and ashes over the party.<sup>1</sup> This exhibition of public support hastened Aurangzib's decision to murder Dara-Shukoh and his son. On 22 Zu'l-hijja 1069/10 September 1659 both were executed not only on charges of heresy and infidelity, but for the crime of calling Hinduism and Islam 'twin brothers'.<sup>2</sup>

Although Dara's life ended tragically this was only after he had already made an indelible mark on the history of sufism in India. Although his obsession with mysticism and the *Wahdat at-Wujud* was to some degree the reason for his inefficiency in government, his works on sufism, his translations of the *Upanishads* and his sympathy for and understanding of Hindu mysticism, all assigned him a unique and outstanding place in the history of Indian sufism.

Dara-Shukoh's interest in the Qadiriyya order had first been kindled by his tutor, the revered Shaikh-Mirak, and later deepened through his association with Miyan-Mir. The first of his visits to Miyan-Mir in April 1634 had been initiated by Shahjahan to elicit prayers for some apparently incurable disease suffered by Dara-Shukoh. After touching Dara's hands the sufi filled his earthen-ware cup with water and recited the first verse of the Qur'an. The youth was then given some of the water which he claims cured him of his illness.

After returning from Kashmir at the end of December 1634 the Emperor and the Prince re-visited Miyan-Mir at Lahore. Shahjahan offered gifts

<sup>1</sup>Bernier.

<sup>2</sup>Munshi Muhammad Kazim, *'Alamgir-nama*, Calcutta, 1868, p. 432; *Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, p. 86. Muhammad Saqi, Musta'idd Khan, *Ma'asir-i 'Alamgiri*, Calcutta, 1870-73, p. 27.



of a turban and a rosary; the Miyan accepted the rosary but returned the turban. Considering the Miyan's house to be a holy precinct Dara-Shukoh entered it barefooted. While Shahjahan and Miyan-Mir talked the sufi chewed cloves, the remains of which he spat on the floor. To the disgust of some of those present Dara-Shukoh respectfully picked up the scraps and ate them. When the Emperor left he lingered on, placing his head at the feet of Miyan-Mir. Raising him up the Miyan hugged the young Prince and showered him with blessings.

Once again Dara-Shukoh sent a message to Miyan-Mir with a request for prayers and again the Miyan assured the Prince of his unceasing interest. He is also believed to have stressed to his favourite disciples (who included Mulla-Salih, Shaikh Ahmad, Miyan Hajji Muhammad Banyani) that he always prayed for the spiritual development of the Prince and that they should do likewise. The Prince came to believe that as long as Miyan-Mir was living he would receive from him countless benefits and that after his death such blessings would emanate from his spirit.

Dara believed that on 27 Ramazan 1051/30 December 1641 (the *Lail-atu'l-Qadr*), he received instructions from the spirit of the deceased Miyan. The Prince was sitting facing the Ka'ba in the last few hours before midnight when suddenly he was seized by an intense feeling of despair. Just before dawn he saw Miyan-Mir's tomb in a vision with its inhabitant sitting on a chair. Beckoning Dara-Shukoh, the Miyan received the Prince who fell at his feet. Dara was given some sweets, thus symbolizing his initiation into the Qadiriyya order, after which the mystic proceeded to press Dara's ears with his finger tips and to hug him so tightly that he felt his whole body being transformed into the *Sultan al-Azkar*<sup>1</sup> and he was drowned in a wave of mysterious sounds. After this experience Dara never ceased to ascribe the Miyan's spiritual grace as being a gift from God.<sup>2</sup>

The interest of Miyan-Mir and other Qadiriyya *pirs* in Prince Dara-Shukoh increasingly stimulated his interest in sufism. Gradually he came to have an obsessive belief that the five main sufi orders in India (the Qadiriyya, Naqshbandiyya, Chishtiyya Kubrawiyya and Suhrawardiyya) were the pivot on which all worldly and spiritual matters depended. Accepting the impossibility of a Muslim attaining his spiritual goal in this world and final salvation without the assistance of these orders, Dara-Shukoh argued that Muslims should not remain outside their influence. His own well-being he attributed to the Qadiriyya.<sup>3</sup>

On 27 Ramazan 1049/21 January 1640 Dara-Shukoh completed his

<sup>1</sup>*Sultan al-azkar* or *Sultan-i zikr* is a process of mystic transformation in the sufi leading him towards *fana'*, HSI, pp. 342-43.

<sup>2</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 48-55.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 13-17.



first text on sufism, the *Safinatu'l-auliya'*. It is a biographical dictionary which lists all the significant sufis (both dead and living) and is divided into the following eight sections.

1. Muhammad, the first four Caliphs, the twelve Imams, some companions of the Prophet Muhammad and others who had met the former (*tabi'in*) and the four founders of the Sunni legal system.
  2. The Qadiriyya order; starting with Shaikh Ma'ruf Karkhi, the son of Firuz or Firuzan (but according to others of 'Ali), they were Shaikh Sari al-Saqti, Shaikh Junaid of Baghdad, Shaikh Abu Bakr Shibli, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahid Tamimi, Shaikh Abu'l-Farah Tartusi, Shaikh Abu'l Hasan Hakkari, Shaikh Abu Sa'id Mubarak, Shaikh Hammad bin Muslim, the spiritual ancestor of Ghausu's-Saqalain (Ghaus al-A'zam Shah Muhiu'd-Din Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani), the ten sons of the latter. Shaikh Muhiu'd-Din Ibn al-'Arabi, Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Muhammad bin Ishaq Qunawi and Imam 'Abdu'llah bin Asa'd Yafi'i. Then follows an account of Indian Qadiriyyas in which the author states that the order was founded by Makhdum Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir II, a descendant of Ghausu'l-A'zam, in the eighth generation. The account of the Indian Qadiriyyas ends with a biographical note on Miyan-Mir and a list of his disciples.
  3. The Naqshbandiyya order. Among the Indian Naqshbandiyyas were Khwaja 'Abdu'sh-Shahid (who lived eighteen years in India and died in Samarqand in 982/1574-75) and Khwaja Baqi.
  4. The Chishtiyya order. The Indian Chishtiyyas who are mentioned include Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Sijzi, Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri, Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Ushi Kaki, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', Amir Khusrau, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Gharib, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari.
  5. The Kubrawiyya order. No Indian Kubrawiyyas are listed.
  6. The Suhrawardiyya order of which the following members were Indian: Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya Multani, Shaikh Fakhru'd-Din 'Iraqi, Amir Husaini Sadat, Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Muhammad, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din. Makhdum Jahaniyan, Shaikh Siraju'd-Din Muhammad Shah 'Alam (Qutb-i 'Alam).
  7. Miscellaneous saints. Of 217 saints of various orders, only these were Indian: Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi, Shaikh Adhan of Jaunpur, Shaikh Dawud Jahni Qadiri, Shaikh Nizam of Narnaul, Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati, Shah Abu'l Ma'ali Qadiri, Shaikh Muhammad Bin Fazlu'llah, Shaikh Ahmad Kabuli al-Sarhindi (Mujaddid) and Shaikh Balawul Qadiri.
  8. Female saints and prominent women. Of thirteen listed, three women are described more fully. They include Bibi Jamal Khatun, the daughter of Qazi Sa'in-Data, the sister of Miyan-Mir.
- The biographical notes in the *Safinatu'l-auliya'* refer predominantly to



non-Indian mystics and were mainly gathered from Hujwiri's *Kashfu'l-mahjub*, the *Tazkiratu'l-auliya'* by Faridu'd-Din 'Attar and the *Nafahatu'l-uns* of Nuru'd-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami. Although Dara-Shukoh claimed to have read other works besides these three, he was deeply indebted to Jami's work and was proud to imitate his style.<sup>1</sup> He borrowed the account of Indian sufis (including the Qadiriyyas) from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's *Akhbaru'l-akhyar*.<sup>2</sup> Dara-Shukoh actually claimed in this work to have personally seen the first four Caliphs (known as the *Khulfa-i Rashidun*) in a vision and to have obtained their blessings.<sup>3</sup>

When Dara-Shukoh started writing the *Safinatu'l-auliya'* his dreams were filled with visions of himself circumambulating the tombs of Imam Musa Kazim<sup>4</sup> and the Ghausu'l-A'zam in Baghdad and as such, he became convinced of their approval of his work.<sup>5</sup> In it Dara also noted, God's promise never to leave his people without the guidance of a saint and the popular belief that, besides the prophets, saints were nearest to God.<sup>6</sup> Many respected sufis were quoted by him as supporting the idea that the role of sufis in the welfare of Muslims and the well-being of the world was a crucial one. Dara-Shukoh endorsed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's statement that sufis were both worldly and heavenly monarchs. He also supported Shaikh Abu 'Abdu'llah Maghribi in his declaration that saints were Divine trustees for all humanity, as well as Shaikh Zu'nun Misri, who believed that anyone from whom God turned His face automatically began criticising His friends.

According to the *Safinatu'l-auliya'*, Ibrahim Qassar asserted that the company of sufi saints and disinterested service of the friends of God were undisputed guarantees of a man's protection from evil.<sup>7</sup>

Although Dara-Shukoh generally drew his information from a number of different well-known sources, he fleetingly divulged some interesting titbits not included in other works. One such example is his statement that Khwaja Hafiz (b. circa 726/1325-26, d. 791/1389 or 792/1390), the famous Persian poet, was a disciple of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband and that the auguries taken from Hafiz's *Diwan* embodied a subtle spiritual Reality that was exceedingly helpful in deciding on a future course of

<sup>1</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 83, 216.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 33.

<sup>4</sup>Imam Musa bin Ja'far Kazim was the son of the sixth Shi'i, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (d. 148/765), Imam Musa al-Kazim, the seventh Shi'i Imam, was born in 128/745-46, According to Shi'i authorities, the 'Abbasid caliph Harun ar-Rashid (170/786-193/809) imprisoned Imam Musa al-Kazim in Medina and transferred him to a prison in Baghdad where he was killed in 183/799-800. The tomb of the Imam is situated in a suburb of Baghdad, known as Kazimain.

<sup>5</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 58.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, pp. 15-17.



action. Dara-Shukoh then related how, when Jahangir his grandfather was alienated from his father and was living in Agra he was undecided whether or not to initiate a reconciliation. When opening the *Diwan* he came across the following *ghazal*.

'Why should I not set off for my own homeland,  
Why should I not become the dust of the street of my beloved.  
Since I cannot bear the pangs of living in a strange land under humiliating circumstances,

Why should I not go to my own town and become its master.'

Believing this to be an augury, Jahangir returned to serve his father and when Akbar died he acceded to the Mughal throne. Dara-Shukoh also mentioned he had in fact seen a copy of the *Diwan* personally signed by Jahangir containing the above note.<sup>1</sup>

The *Safinatu 'l-auliya'* is also interesting for the glimpse it gives of Dara's Sunni orthodoxy. In it he mentioned a visit to the tombs of some sufis in Ghazna. The Prince had originally planned to by-pass the resting place of Hakim Sana'i Ghaznawi,<sup>2</sup> suspecting the mystic of Shi'i tendencies. However, prior to the visit Dara believed he had a vision of Hakim Sana'i's tomb on which the poet's name was inscribed. Although Dara could not recall if the word 'Sunni' was included, the dream convinced him of Hakim Sana'i's orthodoxy, which belief was later reinforced by a visit to the real grave which proved to be identical to the one seen in his dream. This was sufficient for Dara-Shukoh to believe that the controversial verses in the *Hadiqat al-haqiqah* had been interpolated by some schismatic Shi'is.<sup>3</sup>

Dara-Shukoh was convinced that the individual superiority of the first four Caliphs of the Prophet had been graded according to the order in which they became Caliphs. However he also noted that 'Ali, the first Imam of the Shi'is, was accepted by all sufis orders as the founder of their systems.<sup>4</sup> Again, commenting on Imam Muhammad<sup>5</sup> (son of the

<sup>1</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 184.

<sup>2</sup>'Abu'l-Maid Majdud Sana'i (d. 525/1130-1) was born in Ghazna or Balkh in the middle of the 5th/11th century. For a few years he served at the court of the Ghaznavid sultans but later resigned, dedicating himself to sufi practices and poetry. His sufi *magnum opus*, the *Hadiqatu'l-haqiqah wa Shari'atu't-tariqa*, consisting of about 10,000 couplets, explains sufi truth through parables. *HSI*, pp. 27, 79, 81, 209, 362.

<sup>3</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 167.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup>Imam Muhammad al-Qa'im, the twelfth Imam of the Shi'is is also known as al-Mahdi (the Directed One). He is said to have been born at Samarra in either 255/868-69 or 256/869-70. After the death of his father, Abu Muhammad Hussan al-'Askari, he is believed to have mysteriously disappeared. From 260/873 to 329/941 Imam Muhammad, then known as the Hidden Imam, remained in touch with his followers through various representatives (*safirs*). This period is known as the Lesser *Ghayba* (Concealment) 941 dates the beginning of the Greater *Ghayba* which was to last until



eleventh Imam Hasan 'Askari<sup>1</sup> [232/847-260/873]) Dara mentioned that the Shi'i wrongly believed that he had been living in concealment from public view and that he would, before the end of the world, rise as a Mahdi. Dara-Shukoh thought instead that Sunni belief that the birth of a Mahdi would be followed by the reappearance of Christ, which had not yet occurred, must be the more valid.<sup>2</sup>

After the completion of his first work, Dara-Shukoh's personal experience of mysticism deepened. He claimed to have had a divinely-ordained meeting with a spiritual director whom he failed to name; the meeting was specified as having taken place on 12 Zu'l-hijja 1049/14 April 1640.<sup>3</sup> In that single night, the Prince believed he achieved spiritually what generally took others several months to do; and all without extensive self-mortification. This experience marked a watershed in Dara-Shukoh's life: from that moment onwards having been showered with Divine Grace he swore detachment from the world; although he dwelt in the world he was not of it; while separated from the company of dervishes he remained one of them.

Although Dara-Shukoh always referred to his powerful spiritual preceptor by the vague term, 'God's friend', he must have been referring to Mulla-Shah, the mystic who, as already mentioned, initiated him as a Qadiri. The Prince believed Mulla-Shah's interest in him had sprung from his unswerving devotion to sufis while still a youth, coupled with his earnest wish for a *pir* inspired by a Divine message. A similar message prophesied that God would grant to him what had been given to no earthly king. Dara also believed his association with Mulla-Shah to be an answer to his prayers, in accordance with God's promise in the Qur'an to grant one's deepest desires.<sup>4</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's second work was the *Sakinatu'l-auliya'*. It included an account of Miyan-Mir, the latter's sister, Bibi Jamal Khatun and the Miyan's disciples. These last were covered under two headings, the first

the day of the Resurrection. It is believed that Imam Muhammad is still alive and that he will survive until the Last Day, controlling the fortunes of Shi'is, and appearing to those with whom he has chosen to communicate. Before the Last Day he will reappear and restore justice and true faith (Shi'ism) to the world.

<sup>1</sup>Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali b. Muhammad al-'Askari, the eleventh Imam of the Isna Ash'ari Shi'is, was born in Medina, but in 233/847-48 or 234/848-49 was taken by his father, 'Ali bin Muhammad (known as Naqi) to Samarra, where the latter had been summoned by the Caliph al-Mutawakkil (232/847-247/861). There the child and his parents lived in great fear for their lives. In 254/868 'Ali b. Muhammad was killed and Hasan 'Askari succeeded in his father's position as the eleventh Imam. On 1 Rabi' I 260/25 Dec. 873 Hasan 'Askari also died and was succeeded by the twelfth Imam, Muhammad al-Qa'im.

<sup>2</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 70-73.



being of those who were deceased, and the second of those who were alive at the completion of the work in 1052/1642-43. While in general it summarized other sources, the *Sakantu'l-auliya* was also based on Dara-Shukoh's personal knowledge of contemporary sufis. The book had been planned some years earlier and at least a sketch of Miyan-Mir's life had been made before its completion. In it we are told the author had already written a treatise giving an account of Miyan-Mir's<sup>1</sup> life. The date 1052/1642-43 is given for the compilation of the *Sakinatu'l-auliya*.<sup>2</sup> The date of Bibi Jamal's death, given as 27 Rabi' I 1057/2 May 1647,<sup>3</sup> must be a later addition by either the author himself or someone else.

In the *Sakinatu'l-auliya* Dara-Shukoh once more stressed his conviction that every Muslim, of either high or low status, should be initiated into one of the five orders. Nevertheless he continued to press the superiority of the Qadiriyya. Not only had many eminent sufis prior to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani prophesied the spiritual prominence of the order's founder, but leading saints of the other four orders had been in contact with him and received some form of spiritual benefit. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir's claim that his foot was on the neck of every saint of God was, according to Dara-Shukoh, Divinely inspired and therefore indicative of his eminence.<sup>4</sup>

After completing the *Sakinatu'l-auliya*, Dara-Shukoh seems to have plunged himself even more deeply into the study of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the sufi *Tawhid*. None of the great writings on the subject were neglected; these included the *Risala-i Sawanih* by Ahmad al-Ghazali, (the brother of Muhammad Hamid al-Ghazali of Tus),<sup>5</sup> the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya* and the *Fusus al-Hikam* by Ibn 'Arabi, the *Lama'at* of Fakhru'd-Din 'Iraqi<sup>6</sup> and the *Lawami* and the *Lawa'ih* of Nuru'-Din 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami.

Dara-Shukoh also rigorously performed the Qadiriyya form of *zikr*. In Rajab 1055/August 1645 he experienced what he believed to be a Divine voice. It confirmed the superiority of the Qadiriyya order, starting that its founder, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani, had received its rules directly from the Prophet and that the order had been transmitted by the second Ghausu'l-A'zam, Miyan-Mir, and the leading *pir*, Mulla-Shah. The same night Dara-Shukoh on the basis of the following augury from the Qur'an was divinely inspired to write a treatise to be a guide-book for the dedicated seekers of God:

And We verily gave the Scripture unto Moses after We had destroyed the generations of old; clear testimonies for mankind, and a guidance and mercy, that haply they might reflect.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Safinatu'l-auliya*, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 131.

<sup>5</sup>*HSI*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>7</sup>*Qur'an*, XXVIII, 43.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 13-20.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 204-6.



Divine inspiration, said Dara-Shukoh, led him to complete the *Risala-i Haqq-numa* in the following year (1056/1646–47). In this work he asserted that the form of sufism he outlined was patterned on the daily religious life of the Prophet. In Muhammad's time, he wrote, disciples were not called *murids* but *yars* (*sic.* companions or *sahaba*) and in his *Risala* he also had chosen to use this term. Undaunted by the fact that it was generally believed that only dervishes could write a truly profound treatise on mysticism, Dara, while admitting that these authors were dependent for their inspiration on Divine Grace, believed the Divine Will had freely bestowed that Grace on him too, irrespective of the fact that he was a Prince of the blood and not a dervish. To Dara the acquisition of *faqr* (sainthood) depended on Divine Grace only, not on individual action or effort.<sup>1</sup>

The treatise had been originally designed to describe firstly the four 'awalam (spheres or spiritual realms) through which mystics passed during their sufic journey, and secondly the Qadiriyya meditational exercises. Later Dara added another two chapters on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

Dara-Shukoh described the 'alam-i nasut (physical world) variously called by sufis the world of sensorial existence, the world of material forms, of fantasy and of consciousness. The seeker of *Haqq* (Reality) could in fact gain the highest perception of Being and God's perfection while still in this sphere. However this perception could most effectively be achieved by retiring to a lonely place. There the sufi should meditate, using the heart, which it was believed differed from the cone-shaped heart of flesh possessed by both animals and other men, the heart of a dervish being free from fear and anxiety and the centre of his meditation.<sup>2</sup> Through persistent meditation the distinction between the perceiver and goal was obliterated. This spiritual state led into the 'alam-i misal (world of images) which in turn directed one to the 'alam-i malakut (angelic kingdom), the world of spirits, of invisible realities and of mystery. Naturally the 'alam-i nasut was perishable, and although the 'alam-i malakut resembled it in form, it itself was eternal. After entering this sphere the person meditating was now only a spirit able to see the form of either his *pir* or someone else he revered. This indicated that the only forms to survive in the world of spirits were in spirit form, devoid of their worldly bodies. In the psychic sphere, spiritualists who were endowed with the sight of the Divine consciousness would be delighted by beautiful, noble sounds and the melodious voices of spirits. Meditation, believed Dara, scraped away the rust from the heart, making it into a mirror illuminated by light. Such a well-lit heart reflected the forms of the prophets, saints and angels, all of whom were able to solve any of the mystic's problems.

<sup>1</sup>*Risala-i Haqq-numa*, Tehran, 1961, pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 5-6.



To Dara-Shukoh the psychic state had been designed to help direct human beings, long polluted by separation from the serenity of spirituality, back to an understanding of its real subtleties. It was crucial to remember that if the physical nature were to dominate the spirit, the latter would then assume the nature of the former, and vice versa. Muhammad was the classic example of someone whose body had been subdued to such an extent that it was even immune from attacks by flies, was unable to cast a shadow, and was surrounded by air which remained constantly pure. Dara-Shukoh added that the Prophet Muhammad's supreme control over the '*alam-i malakut*' should not raise any doubt or controversy over his bodily ascent to heaven (*mi'raj*).

Dara-Shukoh exhorted the seeker of the mystic path to abandon the '*alam-i nasut*' and to control both the '*alam-i misal*' and the '*alam-i malakut*'. Then further efforts should be made to illuminate and purify the heart through the devotional and meditational exercises devised by the Qadiriyya *pirs*. To his readers he explained that the heart had been dubbed by sufis 'the seat of God', as in it was reflected the Reality of Essence. One of the meditational exercises prescribed for the seeker who felt he had reached the '*alam-i malakut*' was to slowly recite the name 'Allah' in the heart without using the tongue. A nonstop recitation of the word filled the heart with a Divine consciousness which would continue even in dreams. Both infidels and Muslims, said Dara-Shukoh, sought to obtain perception of the Exalted Name of God (*Ism-i A'zam*), but apart from a few chosen spiritualists no-one had obtained it.

Personally Dara-Shukoh preferred to meditate while restraining the breath (*habs-i nafs*). He believed this to be the most effective way of meditating and thoroughly recommended it to others. The Qadiriyyas practised many forms of breath control which they ascribed originally to the Ghausu'l-A'zam. Dara-Shukoh believed that both his *pirs*, Miyan-Mir and Mulla-Shah, practised the most perfect of all forms of *habs-i dam*. According to Dara-Shukoh this was the most effective form of the *habs-i nafs* which he himself practised.

The initiate should retire to a lonely place and sit in the posture used by the Prophet Muhammad. He should place the elbows on two knees and should tightly close the lobes of his ears allowing no air to pass. He should then shut his eyes with his two index fingers in such a way that the upper eyelid was fixed steadily on the lower eyelid without the fingers pressing the eyeballs. On the upper and lower lips he should place the ring finger and small fingers thus closing the mouth. The right middle finger should then be placed on the right side of the nose and the left middle finger on the left-side. He should then tightly close the right nostril with the right middle finger so that the breath may not pass through it. The left nostril should be opened and he should breathe slowly, reciting



simultaneously '*La Ilah*' (There is no God . . .). Drawing the breath up to the brain, he should then tightly close the left nostril also, with the left middle finger, and keep the breath confined within the body. He should retain the breath as long as he does not feel suffocated; the period of restraining the breath should be increased gradually. The exhaling of the breath should be performed by first removing the middle finger from the left nostril and this process should take place slowly, as expelling the breath quickly is injurious to lungs. In the course of exhaling, '*Il-Allah*' (...but Allah) should be repeated.

Dara recommended the persistent repetition of this process reminding neophytes that some perfect sufis were able to inhale and exhale only four times in twelve hours. An exceptional case was Mullah-Shah who, between the time of his obligatory prayers at dusk and those at dawn, inhaled and exhaled only once. Moreover for thirty years he never slept. Miyan-Mir recommended that during the period when the breath was drawn in until the moment of expulsion, sufis should recite '*La Ilah*' mentally in order to drive out any frightening visions or disturbing thoughts. This process, he called *zad-wa-burd* (struck and carried), for a sufi who was able to strike the name Allah 'on the target of his heart, had shot the ball of victory through the goal'.

Dara-Shukoh concludes that the ecstasy, warmth, elegance and illumination generated in the heart by the *habs-i nafs* eradicated grossness or languor. It also enabled sufis to hear mysterious sounds; however they should not consider that the sound emerged out of the heart but that the whole universe was filled with it.

The most significant form of *zikr* to Dara-Shukoh was the *Sultan al-Azkar*. To perform this the devotee had to retire either into the jungle or at least to a cell where no human sound could be heard. The devotee was then required to concentrate so closely on hearing that finally he began to 'feel' the presence of a mysterious sound. Gradually the sound became so intense that from all directions the mystic felt surrounded by it. Dara reminded sufis that the Prophet had reportedly heard a peculiar sound before first receiving Divine revelation from the angel Gabriel. Sometimes this sound changed into that of water boiling in a cauldron, at others it was like bees humming. Sometimes the Prophet had felt an angel was speaking to him; at others the noise resembled bells ringing on a chain. The *Sultan al-Azkar* enabled the prophets to receive Divine revelation, but others it lifted into a state of indescribable ecstasy. Miyan-Mir is said to have informed Dara-Shukoh that, according to Ghausu'l-A'zam, the Prophet had practised *Sultan al Azkar* for six months prior to revelation in the cave at Hira. According to Dara, Miyan-Mir considered the *Sultan al-Azkar* so significant that he disclosed it only to a few chosen disciples, and then only through the use of symbols. Mulla-



Shah was reported to have taken twelve months to hear the sound; however, the Prince asserted that those he had trained 'felt' it after only three or four days. This was ascribed to the fact that it was given to them freely without symbols. To Dara the *Sultan al-Azkar* was a rare gift from the Divine, granted only to a truly fortunate few.<sup>1</sup>

Higher than the '*alam-i malakut*' was the '*alam-i Jabarut*' (the world of absolute sovereignty). The state of self-effacement involved the devotee becoming unconscious of both the '*alam-i nasut*' and the '*alam-i malakut*'. To Junaid of Baghdad (d. 298/910), this state represented the highest achievement of a sufi. According to him *Tasawwuf* amounted to 'sitting for a moment without an attendant.' Shaikhu'l-Islam, Khwaja 'Abdu'llah Ansari (396/1005-481/1089) explained this phrase as 'finding without seeking' and 'seeing without the use of sight,' for he believed the use of the eyes for a sight of God was in itself a type of sickness. If a devotee's heart failed to perceive even slightly the presence of any of the material or psychic forms of *nasut* or *malakut*, he was also in the '*alam-i Jabarut*'. The only distinction between one who was conscious of the Divine and one who had no access to Him was that the latter unwillingly confronted the '*alam-i Jabarut*', while the former entered the *alam-i Jabarut*, at his own will.<sup>2</sup>

The '*alam-i Lahut*' (world of Divinity) was also known as the world of *Huwiyya* (He-ness), the world of Essence, Colourlessness,<sup>3</sup> Universality and Purity. This sphere was the root cause of the other worlds (*nasut*, *malakut* and *Jabarut*) and in fact encircled them. It could be compared with the spirit, while the others were the body. All other worlds either entered into, or emerged out of, the *Lahut* which existed through the Absolute.

The *Huwiyya* of the Lord was explained by Dara with a reference to the *Hama Ust* (All is He) concept of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. As non-Being was 'nothing,' the only alternative for a devotee was to consider himself the '*ayn*' (essence) of Being and to remain remote from controversy over such questions as 'I' and 'You'. This was the only way to understand the reality of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al Wujud*) and the mystery of the self-manifestation of the Essence. He warned sufis that Being should not only be attributed with transcendence *tanzih*, colourlessness and exclusiveness and the like, as this idea rejected the attribute or resemblance *tashbih*. Both *tashbih* and *tanzih* were forms of the self-manifestation and self-determination (*ta'ayyunat*) of the Absolute. If a devotee considered a single particle of matter as distinct from Him he had neither a perception of *Tawhid* nor a knowledge of God.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Risala-i Haqq-numa*, pp. 6-14.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>*infra*, p. 179.

<sup>4</sup>*Risala-i Haqq-nama*, pp. 16-17.



Dara-Shukoh then discussed the famous sufi analogies used to explain the Unity of Being, such as the ocean, waves, ripples and bubbles. Hundreds of thousands of bubbles and ripples emerged from the ocean, but remained a part of it even though they were identified by separate names; similarly the Essence remained One. According to Dara the statements of most sufis confirmed the truth of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, although he acknowledged that those who paid attention only to the God of faith were unaware of the receptacle in which He manifested Himself. He quoted many *ruba'is* (quatrains) of earlier sufis who ridiculed dogmatic believers, One said,

'Oh ! You seek God everywhere,

You are 'ayn (essence) to God, not separate from Him.

Your search may recall this analogy.

A water drop in the ocean, continues to seek it !'<sup>1</sup>

When Dara-Shukoh completed the *Risala-i Haqq-numa* he was still ignorant of the Hindu mystical system although it is possible he may have already met some Hindu mystics and ascetics. His *Wahdat al-Wujud* was strictly based on the ideas expressed by Ibn 'Arabi and he considered Allah to be the *Ism-i A'zam* (The Great name), ignoring the significance of *Om*, the sacred word of the Hindu divines. His later contact with *yogis* and *sannyasis* refined his understanding of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and, although the basic concepts remained essentially unaltered, he began interpreting them in a terminology understood by Hindus and Muslims alike. Concentrating mainly on the Qadiriyya practices, he had little opportunity to pay attention to the Chishtiyya interpretations of sufi ideologies as contained in the *Rushd-nama* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi.<sup>2</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's appointment as Governor of Allahabad in June 1645, brought him into contact with Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Mubriz<sup>3</sup> (d. 1648). Although it appears that during this period Dara visited neither Allahabad nor the Shaikh, he began a correspondence with him, posing complicated questions on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. In a letter Dara wrote that the greatest pleasure given to him as Governor of Allahabad had been that Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Mubriz resided in the same province. Dara also requested the Shaikh to consider him a sincere devotee of dervishes, and that whatever he considered befitting for the promotion of the welfare of the *mu'minan* (Muslims) he might order the Prince's deputy, Baqi-Beg, to execute.

Some of the questions posed by Dara in his letters to Shaikh Muhibbu'llah and the corresponding answers follow :

Dara-Shukoh : what is the beginning and end of the sufi path ?

<sup>1</sup>*Risala-i Haqq-numa*, pp. 16-19.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 335-53.

<sup>3</sup>*infra*, pp. 264-67.



Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : The beginning is liberation from a belief in unreality and the end is the realization of the essence of the Absolute.

Dara-Shukoh : What is the significance of the statement, 'Return to the beginning,' made by *Saiyidu't Ta'ifa* (Junaid of Baghdad) to a question on the culmination of the sufi path ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah: Firstly, in the beginning the sufi excludes the 'ayn (Essence), imagining the 'ayn as different (*ghayr*); in the end he absorbs himself in the quest for the 'ayn. Secondly, the beginning of the sufi journey occurs in the *nasut* (world of bodies) and proceeds to the seat of the Merciful (God). The completion of the sufi path involves descent from ascent. Leaders among gnostics are conscious of this and realize that spiritual spheres resemble the movement of time. The point which is at the extremity of the circle is in fact its focus.

Dara-Shukoh : What is the true significance of the *Hijab-i Akbar* (Great Veil) ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : If knowledge strikes (influences) the heart, it is welcome. If knowledge strikes the body, it is a burden.

I believe that all knowledge is the veil, for His attributes are the veil of the Essence. It is for this very reason that in their teachings gnostics do not insist that those who seek Reality should attain any particular type of knowledge.

Dara-Shukoh : Were the pre-Islamic prophets aware of *Tawhid* ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : According to mystics a perfect form of gnosticism is indispensable to prophethood although prophets themselves may be unaware of this. All prophets are endowed through Divine mercy with gnosticism, although all the pre-Islamic ones were not gnostics of equal stature. It has been unequivocally ascertained that their 'ayn (essence) perceived the self-manifestation of the Absolute without being veiled by attributes. In short, they themselves were followers of *Tawhid*. Prophets were forced to disseminate Divine secrets symbolically, according to the general understanding of their times, and therefore did not openly preach on certain esoteric matters.

Dara-Shukoh : Does spiritual progress reach a stage of finalization ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : Oh! brother, limitless is the Divine Court,

He who proceeds towards that Court, is heading towards finalization,

In relation to the Absolute proceed in the direction you know.

Dara-Shukoh : Do the words 'a tyrant and a fool' in the Qur'anic verse, 'Lo ! he (man) hath proved a tyrant and a fool', seek to condemn or praise human beings ?<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : It indicates Divine compassion for man.

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXXIII, 72. The complete verse says, 'Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrunk from hearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo! he hath proved a tyrant and a fool.'



Dara-Shukoh : As the non-existence ('*adam*') of the existence is impossible, how can we account for the nonexistence of things ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : This occurs in accordance with the Qur'anic verse, 'Everything will perish save His countenance'.<sup>1</sup> Things are non-existent (*ma'dum*), only metaphorically they exist divorced from Reality.

Dara-Shukoh : Are there some devotional exercises which devotees perform involuntarily ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : My dear! All living beings are involuntarily concerned with their own devotional exercises. Gnostics who occupy a high status indulge in devotional exercises with a full understanding of the meaning of their actions.

Dara-Shukoh : How is it possible to perform *namaz-i be khatra* (undisturbed from external thoughts) ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : In these circumstances : When the ecstatic's love for God uproots all hope and fear existing in his heart and also when the exoteric and esoteric eyes become so engrossed in enjoying the sight of the waves of the *Wahdat* (Unity of Being) that they are totally unconscious of the fact they are doing so.

The waves appear because the ocean exists.

The straw (wrongly) considers itself the cause of the motion.

Secondly, thoughts on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* should be free from anxieties relating to the waves of creation. The form of *namaz* which some sufis call *namaz-i be khatra* is a misnomer; what actually occurs is that different types of spiritual satisfaction are experienced by changes in the form of the anxiety. God says, 'And surely thou hast sublime morals.' A perfect *namaz* is devoid of anxiety, consequently it is the *mi'raj* (highest point of ascent) for the faithful. The anxieties are internal. In a sense gnostics perform *namaz-i be khatra* through an awareness that all anxieties emanate from the Bountiful Originator (Allah).

Dara-Shukoh : Are all men equally capable of recognizing God?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : If the rain can grow sugar-cane on all types of plots, all human beings can recognize God in equal degree. Since there is a difference of degree in all fundamental principles, (human beings) too are full of differences. Rumi says,

"If a fish raises its head, it is struck."

If you ponder, you will understand!

Dara-Shukoh : It is possible to acquire perfect knowledge through discipline of the soul ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah it is strange for a seeker of Knowledge of Dara-Shukoh's calibre to ask such a question. By incorporating everything into himself a human being can become self-trained in the realization of Reality through the efforts of his own spirit. As long as he is plunged

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXVIII, 88.



into a whirlpool of fantasy, he considers all forms of self-manifestations as different from Him and His attributes.

Dara-Shukoh : How can the Infinite merge with the (human) heart?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : Those who know about the heart understand that it belongs to the category of the Infinite.

Dara-Shukoh : Is the Lover able to annihilate himself in the Beloved?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : My dear ! The words 'Lover' and 'Beloved' have emerged from Divine Mercy. When true knowledge of this fact is attained, misgivings associated with Unity disappear—"The unity of Friend with friends is pleasant."

Dara-Shukoh : Does the lover obtain union with the Beloved after death ?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : Death resembles a bridge which unites friends. Perfect saints make their statements on the basis of their perfect knowledge and they say man cannot obtain perfection without death.

Dara-Shukoh : What is the difference between love and affliction?

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah : Affliction is a staircase leading to love.

'The part or whole that are seen in the universe.

Are arches on the bridge over the path of Love.'<sup>1</sup>

Deeply impressed by the answers received from Shaikh Muhibu'llah Mubariz, in another letter Dara-Shukoh expressed his gratitude and remarked that people who followed the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and also fully understood it were rare. Some of the Shaikh's replies he understood, said Dara, according to his own spiritual attainments, and some in the light of the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's *Sunna*.

Dara continued that the many contradictory statements in mystical works had been a great source of disappointment to him, therefore he had decided to abandon their study in favour of learning from his own heart—a limitless ocean always yielding fresh pearls. Here again emerges the Prince whose birth-right prevented him from committing to paper what he had learnt through the heart. In spite of all this, he requested the Shaikh to sharpen his (Dara's) spiritual perception through his own mystical experience.<sup>2</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's growing interest in sufism and his association with Hindu mystics, which will be discussed in Chapter eight, provided his rivals and their supporters with a pretext for attack. As a vehicle for his own defence, the Prince hastened to complete the *Hasanatu'l'arifin* which gave a detailed explanation of the ecstatic utterances of mystics. The preface of the work contains a strong condemnation of those he considered so bigoted that they even taunted him with charges of infidelity and apostasy, because of his interest in mysticism and the *Wahdat*

<sup>1</sup>*Faiyazu'l-qawanin*, p. I.O. 3901, ff. 377a-b,

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, 378a-b.



*al-Wujud*. These *mullas* he saw to be self-committed hypocrites whose company was an anathema to the wise. His work was designed to prove that sufis had always used ecstatic utterances, which for them were normal expressions.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Hasanatu'l-'arifin*, Dara-Shukoh mentioned an earlier work by Shaikh Ruzbihan bin Abi Nasr al-Baqli<sup>2</sup> which contained a number of essentially ecstatic mystical sayings he had attempted to compile. Included in the *Hasanatu'l-'arifin* were some of Dara's own mystical verses and also the poetry, sayings and utterances of such outstanding Indian sufis as Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Abu 'Ali Qalandar Panipati, Baba Lal Das, Shah Qutb-i 'Alam, Kabir, Baba Piyara, Miyan-Mir, Mulla-Shah, Shaikh Bari and Shah Dilruba. The *Hasanatu'l-'arifin* included short notes on some Indian sufis and Hindu saints not mentioned in the *Safinatu'l-'auliya* and gave a glimpse of the Prince's own poetic talent. Of Miyan-Mir and his disciples Dara-Shukoh wrote,

'The great Pir Shaikh (Miyan) Mir is my *pir's pir* and my own *pir*. The greatest *shath* (ecstatic utterance) of Miyan-Mir is my *pir* Mulla Shah and I myself am the greatest *shath* of my *pir*. Among the earliest guides the most superior was Shaikh Junaid and in our own times it is Miyan-Mir.'

The work was commenced in 1062/1651-52 and completed at the end of Rabi' I 1064/February 1654.

By the time he had finished the *Hasanatu'l-'arifin* Dara's closest sufi guide, besides Mulla Shah, was Shaikh Bari, to whom he referred in writings as Hazarat Bari (His Worship Bari). Bari refused to divulge to his disciple even his name (and became known by that of his native village), on the pretext that ascetics had no need of an individual name as all names applied to them. His *pir* and *silsila* also remained secret and he asserted that he owed spiritual allegiance only to his order. Dara-Shukoh recorded Shaikh Bari as saying that he had killed both a *mulla* and a *pandit* and that he had nothing else to learn. Nevertheless he did admit that he could not improve on the spiritual advancement of Miyan-Mir. The disciples of Shaikh Bari claimed that he conversed with wild

<sup>1</sup>*Hasanatu'l-'arifin*, Delhi, 1309/1891-92, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh Ruzbihan was also the author of a sufi commentary on the Qur'an entitled '*Ara'is al-bayan fi haqa'iq al-Qur'an*'. He died at Shiraz in 606/1209, a scholar highly respected for his interpretations of sufism. About 700/1300-01 his grandson, Ibrahim bin Shaikhul-Islam Sadru'd-Din Ruzbihan, wrote a detailed account of the life of his illustrious ancestor, entitled the *Sirat nama-i Shaikh Ruzbihan*. W. Ivanov, 'A Biography of Ruzbihan al-Baqli', *Journal of the Asiatic Society Bengal*, XXIV/4 (1928) pp. 353-61. More biographical details about Ruzbihan al-Baqli are contained in the *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, VII, (1931), pp. 1-7.



animals, birds, minerals and vegetables. Reportedly Shaikh Bari believed all saints were male, while the rest of humanity was female and accordingly he used the feminine gender in addressing everyone (excluding the Prince).

The death of Shaikh Bari on 15 Rabi' I 1062/25 February 1652<sup>1</sup> was a terrible loss to the Prince but it failed to undermine his ardour for knowledge of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. After Mulla-Shah and Shaikh-Bari, the third most significant influence on Dara-Shukoh's mystical development was Shah Dilruba. Just as he had eulogized his other mentors, Dara himself called Shah Dilruba the 'King of Faqirs' (dervishes), imploring him always to remember and pray for his welfare. Although his letters to the Shah are undated, Shah Muhammad Dilruba apparently became Dara's *pir* some time in the period between the completion of the *Sakinatu'l-'auliya* and of the *Hasanatu'l-'arifin*. The letters are also a confirmation of Dara's firm belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, by then his all-consuming passion.

Dara-Shukoh even went to the extent of writing in a letter these lines which greatly shocked the orthodox.

'Praise be to Allah ! Praise be to Allah !

By the blessings of the association with this noble and extremely honoured group (the sufis) the *Islam-i majazi* (formal Islam) has disappeared from the heart of this *faqir* and *kufri* *haqiqi* (real infidelity) has appeared there. The true meaning of the following *ruba'i* of the celebrated gnostic, Mawlana 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami, is now clear.

'Thou art clearly manifest in my eyes,  
and I have been unaware.

Thou art hidden in my heart and I have been unaware,

In the entire world I kept on finding Thy trace;

Thou hast been the whole of the world,  
and I have been unaware.

Now I have ascertained the value of true infidelity, I have hung round my body the Brahmanical thread (Zunnar); I have become an idol worshipper instead of a self-worshipper and the resident of an idol temple.

\* \* \*

Were the Muslim to know the significance of the idol,

He would have realized that real faith is in idol worship.'

Dara-Shukoh also wrote mystical poetry, and quoted his own verses in the *Sakinatu'l-'auliya*, the *Risala-i Haqq-numa* and the *Hasanatu'l-'arifin*. He also produced a *diwan*, the *Iksir-i A'zam*, consisting of *ghazals* and *ruba'is*. Using Qadiri as his *nom de plume*, Dara-Shukoh's poems are

<sup>1</sup>*Hasanatu'l-'arifin*, pp. 30-31.



fashioned after those of Jami and Shabistari. His association with Sarmad (whom we shall describe in Appendix B) had further encouraged him to express his mystical feelings through the exuberance and frankness of poetry. Besides his favourite theme of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Dara's poems glorify the Qadiriyyas and constantly challenge the 'ulama' with such bold questions as :

'How long will you boast on your *Shari'a*

Affirming that Ahmad, the Prophet, is different from God ?'<sup>1</sup>

Although the *mullas* abhorred the sufi cry 'All is He', like other followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* Dara-Shukoh's comfort was the Qur'anic line, '...and whithersoever ye turn there is Allah's countenance.'<sup>2</sup>

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Where no uproar and clamour from a Mulla is heard.

May the world rid itself of the terror of a Mulla.

May no-one pay heed to his *fatwas*.

In a city where a Mulla dwells,

No wise man is ever found.<sup>3</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's alienation from the 'ulama' was a foregone conclusion, but some sufi disciples of Mulla-Shah also seem to have intrigued to harm him. Mulla-Shah warned Dara-Shukoh to beware of both overt enemies and those who enrolled as his disciples.<sup>4</sup> However Dara's enthusiasm for the *Wahdat al-Wujud* tended to make him imprudent. Although he left an indelible mark on the history of Indian sufism he failed miserably in his role as heir-apparent and died a tragic death at the hands of his more far-sighted and shrewd brother Aurangzib.

### *The Qadiriyyas in other parts of India*

During the sixteenth century a Qadiriyya centre in Bengal was established by Shah Qamis, the son of Saiyid Abu'l-Hayat. The Shah was able to trace his spiritual descent from Saiyid 'Abdu'r-Razzaq Jilani, a son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani. From Bengal he migrated to Sabura Khizrabad in Thaneswar where he enrolled many disciples and settled in a *khanqah*. It would seem that Akbar persuaded him to return to Bengal where he died on 3 Zu'lqada 992/6 November 1584.<sup>5</sup>

The disciples of Diwan 'Abdu'r-Rashid of Jaunpur also established Qadiriyya centres in Bengal. During the seventeenth century, the most prominent Qadiriyya in Bengal was Mir Saiyid Muhammad Qadiri of Rajmahal, who was succeeded by Shah Ni'matu'llah. Originally from

<sup>1</sup>Ahmad Nabi Khan ed., *Diwan-i Dara-Shukoh*, Lahore, 1969, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, II, 115.

<sup>3</sup>*Diwan-i Dara-Shukoh*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>4</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 183-84.

<sup>5</sup>*AA*, p. 208.



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<sup>4</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 183-84.

<sup>5</sup>*AA*, p. 208.



Narnaul, during a visit to Bengal the latter became so enamoured with the province that he decided to settle there. Prince Shah-Shuja' the Viceroy of Bengal, his sons and some of the Mughal nobility became Shah Ni'matu'llah's disciples. The Shah founded his *khanqah* in the village of Firuzpur, four miles from Rajmahal. According to Sher Khan Lodi, huge quantities of food were daily distributed to the poor of the Shah's *khanqah*. Each year, three days were reserved for a general distribution of food and countless Hindu and Muslim beggars assembled to receive it. A large number of *baqqals* (grain merchants) would assemble to sell grain to the *khanqah* and the occasion became a local fair.

After Shah-Shuja's defeat by Aurangzib and his flight from Dacca to Arakan in Ramazan 1070/May 1660,<sup>1</sup> in keeping with his policy of persecuting the favourites of his rivals, Aurangzib ordered the Governor of Bengal to send Shah Ni'matu'llah to his court. By then the Shah was both aged and crippled. His sons, whom the Governor had severely harassed, urged their father to attempt the trip but the old Shah refused, repeating the famous Persian proverb, 'Delhi is still very far.'<sup>2</sup> Although a *farman* was issued, as with Mulla-Shah good sense prevailed and the Emperor abandoned his persecution of those sufis who had been friendly with his brothers, Dara-Shukoh and Shah-Shuja'. Shortly afterwards the Emperor read some of Shah Ni'matu'llah's writings and began corresponding with him.

Shah Ni'matu'llah died in 1077/1666-67.<sup>3</sup> He had a large number of disciples who propagated the Qadiriyya mystical practices in Bengal. One of these, Hajji Shuhrat, received an encouraging reception at Aurangzib's court and was assigned a village in Mathura. Hajji Shuhrat settled in Mathura where he enjoyed the bounty of imperial favours.<sup>4</sup>

Manikpur, near Allahabad, was the birth-place of Hajji Ibrahim Muhaddis Qadiri, the son of a sufi called Shaikh Dawud. After a *hajj*, he visited Cairo where he was tutored by Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din 'Alqami (a disciple of the famous *Hadis* scholar, Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Suyuti). He also studied *Hadis* under Shaikh Muhammad Bakri Shafi'i before returning to Mecca. In this holy city he was taught *Hadis* by Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi. Each year he managed to make the trip between Egypt and Arabia for a pilgrimage. In Syria he associated with many saints who were both sedentary and led the lives of *qalandars*. After more than twenty-four years abroad he returned to India and settled in Agra. There he was chiefly occupied in lecturing on *Hadis* and *Fiqh*, which was of great benefit to a large number of scholars. On 19 Zu'l-hijja 1001/16

<sup>1</sup> *Alamgir-nama*, pp. 481-89.

<sup>2</sup> See HSI, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *Mir'atu'l-khayal*, pp. 142-45; M. Baqa, *Mir'atu'l-'alam*, (Aligarh University MS.), f. 184a; *Mir'at-i jahan-numa* (Aligarh University MS.), f. 323a.

<sup>4</sup> *Mir'at-i jahan-numa*, f. 323a.



September 1593 he died in Agra at the ripe old age of eighty-six.<sup>1</sup>

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the Qadiriyya order around Lucknow had many successes, the result of the work of the dynamic Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq of Bansa. His grandfather, Mu'inu'd-Din (who also bore the title, Mubariz Khan) had migrated from Badakhshan to the Mughal court at the time of either Akbar or Jahangir. As a descendant of the celebrated Naqshbandiyya, Amir Kulal, Mu'inu'd-Din was given a *mansab*, and embarked on an expedition to ensure the submission of the Rajput *zamindars* of Daryabad and Rudauli, east of Lucknow. He seems to have succeeded in his wars against the Rajputs and settled in the village of Mahmudabad near Daryabad.

Shah Razzaq's father was never able to quite equal his father's great success and steadily lost his possessions.<sup>2</sup> Born in 1046/1636-37, early in his career he had been forced to serve as a common soldier both in the Deccan and Delhi. At Gujarat he was initiated into the Qadiriyya order by Mir Saiyid 'Abdu's-Samad Khuda-Numa, and he returned to Delhi where in compliance with his *pir's* instructions he visited Saiyid Hasan Rasul-Numa.<sup>3</sup>

When Shah Razzaq arrived in Bansa the town was controlled by Nagar Brahmans. Later it was assigned to the Shi'i governor, Nawwab Sa'adat Khan Burhanu'l-Mulk (1722-1739) who made Faizabad his capital.<sup>4</sup> In Bansa during the month of Muharram both the Sunnis and Shi'is of Awadh participated in the mourning and models of Husain's tomb at Karbala, called *ta'ziyas*, were featured in bamboo and paper. From the first to the seventh day of Muharram these were displayed in villages and towns throughout Awadh on platforms placed either under a tree or in a special room.

On the ninth day of Muharram, Shah Razzaq would traditionally pay his respects to the *ta'ziyas*. On one such occasion the Shah believed he had seen Imam Husain and his elder brother Imam Hasan in a dream in which they asked him to explain why he had not visited their house (meaning here, *ta'ziyas*). The Shah replied that he would not dare ignore the holy Imam's *ta'ziyas*. From that day until his death he regularly paid homage to the *ta'ziyas* on the first ten days of Muharram, and would invite the procession to his house where he would stand beside the model silently with folded hands. Reportedly he believed the *ta'ziyas* were more than mere bamboo and paper and that they were inhabited by the holy spirits of the Imams. When old and infirm the Shaikh would pay his respects to the *ta'ziyas*, standing against a wall or supported by a staff.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS., f. 242a.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Khan Razzaqi, *Malfuz-i Razzaqi*, Lucknow, 1313/1896, pp. 4-6, 23.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 106.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 104.



The Shah was deeply interested in the dissemination of the teachings of the *Fusus al-Hikam* and delivered regular lectures on it.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Shah's disciples can be included such leading scholars as Mulla Nizamu'd-Din Muhammad Sihalwi (d. 1161/1748), the son of Mulla Qutbu'd-Din Sihalwi (d. 1103/1692). The Mulla paid his debts to his *pir* by writing the *Manaqib al-hazzaqiyya*, a biographical and anecdotal account of Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq. In this work and the *Malfuz-i Razzaqi* the Shah was depicted as a friend of both Hindus and Muslims. Sunnis and Shi'is and the spiritual supporter of many whom the local administrators, money-lenders and *zamindars* oppressed. Also, his presence in a region dominated by Hindu *zamindars* was a source of inspiration to the local Muslims, including a Qidwa'i leader who had once been a brigand. Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq died on 6 Shawwal 1136/28 June 1724 at Bansa in the Bara banki district of what is now Uttar Pradesh.

From the middle of the seventeenth to the eighteenth century the Qadiriyya order between Kattana and Muzaffarnagar and as far as Ambala (Haryana) went from one success to another, due to the impact of Mir Saiyid Taha Qutbu'd-Din Qadiri of Kattana. The Emperor Aurangzib is said to have asked the Saiyid's leave to visit him at Kattana but received the reply that it was in his best interests to refrain from doing so. The Saiyid believed that sufis who hankered after visits from rulers and the worldly were accursed.<sup>2</sup> He himself loved the company of the common people. Nevertheless he disallowed visitors from remaining with him for more than a few hours at a time. He would become highly annoyed if they failed to observe these rules and would sadly say in his local dialect '*Ya Murtaza 'Ali ya'ni kul bala tali*' (Oh Murtazai 'Ali [the fourth Caliph] down with calamities), thus shaming them into believing that their visits were more of a misfortune than a pleasure. His disciples too were discouraged from seeing him for any longer than was absolutely necessary. Persistently Mir Saiyid Taha reminded such seekers of the Divine that they should spend their entire nights in seclusion, regardless of family responsibilities. Often he would recite this verse of his own,

'From Taha! listen to this important advice,  
Flee from people and draw near to God.'<sup>3</sup>

With the exception of Friday prayers and funeral prayers Saiyid Taha remained for forty years in his cell. Muhammad 'Abdu'r-Rashid, a Qadiri devotee, summed up his *pir*'s teachings this way :

If you wish to obtain light, choose darkness, if you enjoy excursions, you should be satisfied with your cell; if you wish to eat good food choose satisfactions in God; if you wish to gain worldly employment,

<sup>1</sup>*Malfuz-i Razzaqi*, pp. 105-6.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad 'Abdu'r Rashid, *Taha'if-i Rashidiya* (British Museum MS.), f. 151a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 151b.



serve Allah; if you aspire to any occupation indulge in Allah's *zikr*, if you wish to busy yourself with an external form of worship you should go out of your cell to Friday prayers, to a dervish.

At night in the darkness of his cell the Saiyid would loudly recite the words '*Haqq-Haqq*,' and during the day the same words would be repeated quietly. Once a Sunni invited him to give his ruling on the custom of Iranian Shi'is of adding to the *kalima* the phrase '*Ali an Wali Allah*' ('Ali is God's friend'). The Saiyid answered that although 'Ali was unquestioningly God's friend, to make the expression a part of the *kalima* was not right. After Mir Saiyid Taha's death on 12 Rabi' II 1084/27 July 1673 he was buried in Kattana.<sup>1</sup>

Saiyid Taha had twenty-four disciples who were considered to be perfect *khalifas*. Of these, Shah Fath lived in Qandahar, Shah 'Abdu'l-Wahid in Medina, Shah Safi in Istanbul, Shah Allah Bakhsh in Baghdad, Shah 'Abdu'llah Salih in Ceylon and Shah 'Abdu'l-Wahid in Karbala. Of his Indian *khalifas* his favourite was Shah Muhibbu'llah who had an incredible degree of mastery of breath control. Another distinguished *khalifa* was Hajji Shah Fath Muhammad Qadiri who was born at Anbala. Before his birth the famous Naqshbandiyya sufi, Shaikh Adam Banuri,<sup>2</sup> had prophesied to Shaikh Mubarak (Fath Muhammad's father) that his son would be an eminent sufi.<sup>3</sup>

When Fath Muhammad was fourteen years old he began to visit a local *qalandar*, Shaikh Muhammad, who attempted to discourage him from adopting the sufi path. After he proved unsuccessful in this, he initiated Fath Muhammad as a disciple. Later Fath Muhammad became Saiyid Taha's disciple.<sup>4</sup>

After Saiyid Taha's death, Fath Muhammad, although penniless, embarked on the arduous journey to Mecca. There he was initiated by Shaikh Yahya<sup>5</sup> and received his *khirqah*. In Egypt he lived with a Qadiri sufi named Shah Badru'd-Din Qadiri who generally wandered through lonely jungles covering his face with a veil.<sup>6</sup>

From Egypt he returned to India and in 1108/1696-97 settled at Kairana, 31 miles south-west of Muzaffarnagar, in U.P. There he built a house for himself, with *khanqah* and a mosque attached which had been acquired from local gifts.<sup>7</sup> Like a number of other Qadiris he enjoyed such things as expensive clothes and a fine table, believing that the essence of sufism was inner dedication to spiritual matters, but did not preclude

<sup>1</sup>*Trha'if-i Rashidiya*, f. 152a.

<sup>2</sup>*infra*, p. 234.

<sup>3</sup>*Taha'if-i Rashidiyya*, f. 160a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, ff. 162a-166a.

<sup>5</sup>*infra*, p. 292.

<sup>6</sup>*Taha'if-i Rashidiya*, ff. 164b-165a.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, f. 165b.



lawful worldly pleasures. On 29 Rabi' I 1130/2 March 1718 he died.<sup>1</sup> Fath Muhammad's work was continued by his nephew and son-in-law, Nazar Muhammad Qadiri Kairanawi, and by the latter's son, Muhammad 'Abdu'r-Rashid, who also popularized Qadiriyya teachings and practices in western U.P.

<sup>1</sup>*Taha'if-i Rashidiya*, f. 176a.



### Chapter Three

## The Shattariyya Silsila

ALTHOUGH the Shattariyya *silsila* was introduced to India in the fifteenth century it was in fact a branch of the Bistamiyya *silsila*, one of the oldest of all mystic orders. The Shattariyyas drew inspiration from the many books on mystic exegesis and on divination ascribed to Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq<sup>1</sup> (b. 80/699-700 or 83/702, d. 148/765). Another influence on the order came from the mystical stories about the life of Abu Yazid Bastami (d. 261/874 or 264/877-78).<sup>2</sup> The principal exponent of the *silsila* was Abu Yazid al-'Ishqi of Transoxiana. In Ottoman Turkey the order was known as the Bistamiyya and in Iran and Transoxiana it was called the 'Ishqiyya.<sup>3</sup> The Indian branch of the *silsila* chose to call itself the Shattariyya because of the speed with which sufis trained in this order managed to achieve, *fana*'. The mystic perfection the member of other sufi orders finally achieved, the Shattariyya *pirs* claimed, was attained by their disciples at the very beginning of their sufic ascension. Comparing the techniques used by the Shattariyyas with those used by other orders the author of the *Gulzar-i Abrar* writes :

According to the Shattariyya technique neophyte at the very beginning of his training is required to consider himself at the '*ayn*' (essence) of the Being and then descend step by step from the realm of self-manifestation of the Absolute to the phenomenal world. Then step by step he re-ascends and reaches the Divine sphere, effacing all

<sup>1</sup>Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, son of Muhammad al-Baqir, was the sixth Shi'i Imam recognized by both the Isma'ili and the Isna Ashari Shi'is. He led a quiet life in Medina and was regarded as an authority on *Hadis* and *Fiqh* by Shi'is as well as Sunnis. The great Sunni jurists such as Imam Abu Hanifa and Imam Malik consulted him, and the Mu'tazili Wasil bin 'Ata was also his friend. The *Kitab al-Jafr*, said to have been written by Imam Ja'far contains the esoteric interpretations of the Qur'an. Apart from references to it in other works, the *Kitab al-Jafr* no longer survives. *Jafr* or the knowledge about the speculation on the numerical value of the letters of the alphabet (*huruf*) and of divine names (*al-asma' al-husna*) is also said to have been invented by the Imam. Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah* translated by F. Rosenthal, II, New York, 1958, pp. 218-19.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 43-45; *Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS., f. 171a.

<sup>3</sup>J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi orders in Islam*, Oxford, 1973, pp. 98-99.



traces of the stages of ascent. In contrast to this method, the other sufis direct their disciples to ascend step by step from the realm of humanity to the realm of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. At that stage the neophyte is assigned a particular form of mystic light (literally colour)<sup>1</sup> and is then required to get rid of other colours. This long drawn-out process then leads him to the domain of the Divine perception (*'alam al-shahada*).<sup>2</sup>

In the fifteenth century with the growing popularity of the Naqsh-bandiyya order in Central Asia the 'Ishqiyya *silsila* paled into insignificance. Therefore, after the death of the Timurid Sultan Abu Sa'id (855/1451-873/1469) Shah 'Abdu'llah, the enterprising son of Shah Husamu'd-Din, a descendant of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din, 'Umar Suhrawardi, decided to leave that region and migrate to India,<sup>3</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'llah is credited with having changed the name of the 'Ishqiyya order to the Shattariyya.

Little is known of the early career of Shah 'Abdu'llah except that he was probably born somewhere around Bukhara. There he was initiated into the 'Ishqiyya *silsila* by Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif. From Bukhara he visited Nishapur, Iraq and Azerbaijan and then, attracted by the fame of Shaikh Muzaffar Kattani Khalwati, a (spiritual descendant of Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra)<sup>4</sup> he returned to Nishapur. It was said that Shaikh Muzaffar claimed that three days of *khalwa* (retreat) under his direction enabled a mystic novice to reach his goal of union with God. To his great satisfaction, however, the Shah discovered that the Shaikh had underestimated his spiritual eminence, for his achievements were a thousand times greater than those attributed to him, in the opinion of the Shah.

At Azerbaijan Shah 'Abdu'llah was instructed by a Suhrawardiyya Saiyid 'Ali Muwahhid. The Shah found him perfect in the *Shari'a* as well as in the *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa*. From Azerbaijan he reached India early in the ninth/fifteenth century. From there we next find him in Manikpur and Jaunpur. During his travels the Shah wore garments which looked royal, and he was accompanied by sufis dressed in black, holding banners and beating kettle-drums. This pageant naturally managed to arouse much excitement among the population *en route*. The Shah countered any criticism by arguing that he was engaged in a quest to discover more of the secrets of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) from anyone who was more perfect than himself; at the same time others in their turn could learn from his own perception.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*infra*, p. 179.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrār*, Tashkent MS., ff. 92b, 93a.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Sadiq Kashmiri Hamadani, *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, British Museum MS., f. 121b.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, pp. 93-95.

<sup>5</sup>*Gulzar-i abrār*, Tashkent MS., ff. 91b-92a, 97b, 166b.



At Manikpur Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri (853/1449-50) and Raji Saiyid Hamid Shah<sup>1</sup> made a courtesy call on Shah 'Abdu'llah; however they were not impressed by his extensive claims regarding his spiritual powers. Shaikh Husamu'd-Din modestly told the Shah that he had nothing to offer him, neither could he himself learn anything in return for he was still preoccupied in absorbing what his *pir* had imparted to him. Shah 'Abdu'llah was, however, impressed by Shaikh Husamu'd-Din and remarked to his disciples that the Shaikh was the only competent sufi in India.

Shah 'Abdu'llah also met Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simani.<sup>2</sup> At Jaunpur he initiated Shaikh Hafiz Jaunpuri. There the glitter and ostentation of the Shah's sufis alarmed Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi (1401-40). Shah 'Abdu'llah then went to Bengal. He made his traditional challenge to the local sufis either to teach him or be taught by him. Shaikh Muhammad 'Ala, an eminent Bengali sufi, ignored the challenge, derisively replying that sufis from Khurasan and Fars had often arrived with a battery of outlandish claims. Sorely disappointed the Shah retreated to Malwa.<sup>3</sup>

In 846/1442-43 he reached Chittor where Sultan Mahmud Shah Khalji I (839/1436-873/1469) was at that time involved in a protracted siege of the fort.<sup>4</sup> Shah 'Abdu'llah's invocations in the Sultan's favour were believed to have vanquished the enemy. The Sultan sent him to Mandu<sup>5</sup> where he remained until his death under royal patronage, which greatly enhanced his prestige.

During the Shah's lifetime the Shattariyya *silsila* benefited by the influence of many eminent disciples from Bengal to Malwa and by the end of the sixteenth century it was firmly established in Burhanpur, Gujarat and Bengal. From Gujarat it spread into Medina as well as Malaya and Indonesia.

Shah 'Abdu'llah wrote a treatise entitled the *Lata'if-i Ghaibiyya*, dedicating it to his patron Sultan Ghiyasu'd-Din (873/1469-906/1501). In it he outlined the basic framework of Shattariyya teachings and practices. Later Shattariyyas such as Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din and Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus reconstructed the framework of Shattariyya belief on the basis of ideas contained in the *Lata'if-i Ghaibiyya*. In it Shah 'Abdu'llah divided Muslim spiritualists into three categories: *akhyar* (religious),

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 264-65.

<sup>2</sup>Ma'arifu'l-wilayat, f. 538a.

<sup>3</sup>Gulzar-i abrār, Tashkent MS., ff. 92a-b.

<sup>4</sup>According to the *Gulzar-i abrār*, Sultan Ghiyas Shah besieged Chittor. Although Sultan Mahmud could not seize Chittor, he had conquered the neighbouring forts. His successor Ghiyasu'd-Din was a pacifist and feeble. Nizamud-Din Ahmad, *Tabaqat-i Akbari*, III, Calcutta, 1965, pp. 325-26; 'Abdu'llah bin Muhammad 'Umar al-Makki, *Zafar al-waliḥ*, London, 1910, p. 199.

<sup>5</sup>Gulzar-i abrār, Tashkent MS., f. 92b.



*abrar* (the holy), and *shattar* (swift-paced). All three, he said, had their own methods of invocation, remembrance and meditation for the attainment of divine intuition, insight and nearness to God. It was well-known, said the Shah, that the status of the 'ulama' among Muslims was equivalent to the status of the prophets among Israelites and that the Qur'an distinguished between the status of various prophets on a hierarchical basis. This principle was equally applicable to the status of different Muslim spiritualists. Shah 'Abdu'llah believed that the Shattariyyas were superior to other sufis, obtaining direct training from the spirits of the great saints of the past and thus being enabled to traverse the path of sufic ascension rapidly.<sup>1</sup>

In 890/1485 the Shah died and was buried in Mandu, south of the tombs of the Khalji sultans of Malwa.<sup>2</sup> His Bengali *khalifa* was Shaikh Muhammad 'Ala who had originally refused the Shah's invitation to become his disciple. Then the Shaikh reportedly retired for a forty-day retreat (*chilla*). During this period his deceased father appeared in a vision and told him that his ascetic exercises were useless as his spiritual future was then in the hands of a sufi whom he had called 'the prattling fellow of Khurasan.' So Shaikh 'Ala' left for Mandu and for three days stood outside the Shah's house. Finally, moved by Shaikh 'Ala's humility Shah 'Abdu'llah took him as disciple after obtaining a pledge that he would leave his ancestral sufic path and learn Shattariyya practices.<sup>3</sup> Later he was appointed a *khalifa*.

Shaikh 'Ala' who was also well-known by his nickname Qazin, proved to be an enthusiastic exponent of the Shattariyya *silila* in Bengal.<sup>4</sup> His disciple and *khalifa* Shaikh Zuhur Baba Hajji Hamid, was a most loyal disciple and deeply devoted to the interests of his *pir's* family.<sup>5</sup> After the death of Shaikh 'Ala' he cared for the Shaikh's son, Abu'l-Fath Hidayatu'llah Sarmast, training him in the Shattariyya path. As soon as Shaikh Zuhur Baba Hajji found that Shaikh Abu'l-Fath was competent to succeed to his father's position as the head of the Shattariyyas, he transferred the *khirqah* which had been given to him to Shaikh Abu'l-Fath and withdrew from the *khanqah* to lead the life of a retired dervish, enrolling himself Shaikh Abu'l-Fath's *khalifa*.<sup>6</sup> Of Shaikh Hajji Zuhur's

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, ff. 165b-66a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 92a; *AA*, p. 176; *Mir'atu'l-asrar*, f. 496b. *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, ff. 121b-122a, *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 538a.

<sup>3</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Tashkent MS., f. 92b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 116b.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 128b, 165b.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, f. 128a. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman says that Shaikh Qazin Munyari became Shah 'Abdu'llah's *khalifa* in Jaunpur. One of Shaikh Qazin's *khalifas* was Mir Shaikh 'Ali Qiwan, who died in the village of Sara'i-Mir in Jaunpur, and the second was his own son, Shaikh Abu'l-Fath Sarmast. Shaikh Hamid, known as Shaikh Zuhur Hajji Huzur, was Shaikh Abu'l-Fath Sarmast's *khalifa*. *Mir'atu'l-asrar*, ff. 497b-98a.



two famous disciples. Shaikh Phul and Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, we shall hear more shortly. Shaikh Zuhur also lived for a long time in Medina.

In June 1538 the Emperor Humayun, who was greatly devoted to the Shattariyyas, seized Bengal. He succeeded in persuading Shaikh Abu'l-Fath to accompany him on his campaign against the Afghans. But on 9 Safar 946/26 June 1539 the Emperor's powerful Afghan adversary, Sher-Shah, inflicted a crushing defeat on him at Chausa in Bihar. The imperial army fled; Shaikh Abu'l-Fath thereupon returned to Patna where he lived quietly until his death. He was succeeded by his son, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, who like his father was an 'alim and a leading Shattari. Among Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din's outstanding *khalifas* was Shaikh Kamalu'd-Din Sulaiman Quraishi, a teacher of Ghausi Shattari, the author of the *Gulzar-i abrar*.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Hafiz Jaunpuri, Shah 'Abdu'llah's *khalifa* at Jaunpur, was fortunate in having a large number of disciples who lived in various towns of northern India between Jaunpur and Delhi. Of his eminent *khalifas*, the most important was Shaikh Buddhan Shattari, a descendant of Shah 'Abdu'llah. In the reign of Sultan Sikandar Lodi (1489-1517) he was a popular sufi. He died at Panipat.<sup>2</sup> One of Shaikh Buddhan's well-known disciples was Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi "Rajan" (b. 897/1491-92 d. 20 Rabi' I 989/24 April 1581) an uncle of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi and the author of a collection of historical anecdotes entitled the *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*<sup>3</sup> as well as several, now non-extant, Hindi *masnawis*.<sup>4</sup>

Another of Shaikh Buddhan's disciples, Shaikh Wali Shattari of Bidauli (d. 956/1549), the *pir* of Amir Saiyid 'Ali Qiwan of Siwana, was also very famous.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din (d. 921/1515-16), who in his old age settled in Mandu, was originally a Qadiriyya. When he finally entered the Shattariyya order he was initiated by Shaikh Buddhan Shattari. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din became famous mainly for a short treatise he wrote, *Risala-i Shattariyya*. Like Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra,<sup>6</sup> he believed that the ways of God were as numerous as the breaths of his creatures,<sup>7</sup> but that three ways (those of *akhyar*, *abrar*, *shattar*) were pre-eminently superior. The *akhyar* (religious) were dedicated to prayer, fasting, recitation of the Qur'an, pilgrimage and *jihad*. These time-consuming activities were

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 128b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 166a; *AA*, p. 200; *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, ff. 147b-148a.

<sup>3</sup>*RIH*, pp. 227-34.

<sup>4</sup>The Hindi *masnawis* he wrote were the *Paiman* and *Joti Niranjan*. *AA*, p. 174, *Gulzar-i abrar*, ff. 119a.

<sup>5</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 166a.

<sup>6</sup>*HSI*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 95.



rewarded by a meagre degree of blessing. The *abrar* (holy) indulged in hard ascetic exercises, self-mortification, the avoidance of evil, purification of the heart and the polishing of the spirit. The quickest way of all was the *shattar*. There were ten rules for the achievement of the Shattariyya goal : 1. repentance, 2. renunciation of the world, 3. trust in God, 4. contentment, 5. retreat, 6. contemplation of God, 7. patience, 8. satisfaction 9. *zikh*, and 10. concentrated attention on God.

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din divided *zikh* into three categories : 1. the invocation of God's names related to majesty (*jalah*) 2. invocation of His beautiful (*jamal*) names and 3. the invocation of names common to both. Finding their natures filled with pride and aggression sufi novices were to invoke the names in the first category so as to make themselves more submissive, beginning for example with such names as al-Qahhar (the Dominant), al-Jabbar (the Repairer), al-Mutakabbir (the Great). As soon as the neophyte found himself to be more humble he could invoke God's Most Beautiful Names such as al-Malik (the King), al-Quddus (the Holy), al-'Alim (the Knower), and the names which were common both to the *jalah* and *jamal* categories such as al-Mu'min (the Faithful) and al-Muhaimin (the Protector). Later he should repeat the names associated with *jamal* again and then repeat the entire process, thus he would purify his heart and firmly establish *zikh* in it.

Repetition of the ninety-nine names of Allah came under the realm of *talwin* (colouring the heart). The hundredth stage was *tamkin* (majesty) which involved *zikh* of the name of His Essence, the earlier ninety-nine being His Attributes. When the neophyte reached the stage of the hundredth Name, the effulgence of the Name 'Allah' burned into his physical existence, his individuality reached the stage of evanescence in the Essence (*fana'*) and he acquired the stage of reintegration with the Essence (*baqa'*). Such an enlightened heart was able to perceive the reality of everything in both worlds and visit the realm of the spirits.<sup>1</sup>

Breath control, according to Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was indispensable for rendering *zikh* effective.<sup>2</sup> Before commencing it the neophyte should choose a clean place and should purify both his outer and inner selves. He need not use *zikh* only with Arabic or Persian words, but could also use a Hindi *zikh*. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din also<sup>3</sup> recommended the sitting posture of *jogis*, and outlined several magical and mystical practices for the achievement of supernatural powers.<sup>4</sup>

In the first part of the sixteenth century the most influential Shattari sufis in India were Shaikh Phul and his younger brother, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, both *khalifas* of Shaikh Zuhur Hajji Hamid. Shaikh Phul's

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 198-99.

<sup>2</sup>*Risala-i Shattariyya*, India office, MS., ff. 1a-4a.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, f. 14b.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, f. 18a.



surname (*laqab*) was Faridu'd-Din Ahmad and his title (*khitab*) was Jahangir (conqueror of the World). He was believed to have been endowed with the ability to perform miraculous feats and mysterious deeds by invoking the names of God (*da'wat-i asma'*) in various ways. His most notable disciple was the Emperor Humayun who sat at his feet to learn the technique for obtaining supernatural power through the *da'wat-i asma'*. The Emperor's devotion to Shaikh Phul prompted Sadru's-Sudur Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Tattawi, an eminent '*alim* and a Suhrawardi, to become Shaikh Phul's disciple. Reasons of expediency also prompted another eminent Sufi, Maulana Muhammad Farghuli, a Naqshbandiyya, to join the Shattariyya order while large numbers of other Muslims became Shattariyya sufis, possibly to gain the Emperor's favour.<sup>1</sup> In 1538-1539 while he was in Bengal, Emperor Humayun sent Shaikh Phul to persuade his rebel brother, Mirza Hindal to join him in a war against their common enemy, the Afghans. However Mirza Hindal and his advisers rejected the proposal and the leaders of the rebel army urged Hindal to kill Shaikh Phul. This he did, afterwards openly declaring himself Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Phul's younger brother Shaikh Abu'l-Mu'yyad Muhammad, who bore the title of Ghaus, and was popularly known as Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, met a number of saints in his quest for a perfect guide, but it was Shaikh Zuhur Hajji Hamid who finally gave him spiritual satisfaction and initiated him into the mysteries of exorcism through the use of the exalted names of Allah.<sup>3</sup> For thirteen years and four months Shaikh Ghaus performed rigorous ascetic exercises in the caves of Chunar, near the Ganges in the modern district of Mirzapur in the U.P., and became known to the Muslim élite for his miraculous powers. He settled in Gwalior where he became very influential. In November 1526 he helped Babur's army to seize the Gwalior fort, thereby winning the respect and confidence of the Emperor.<sup>4</sup>

During Humayun's reign Shaikh Phul had lived with the Emperor while Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus had his own *khanqah* at Gwalior. After the Afghan Sher Shah acceded to the throne in Agra in May 1540 he could not ignore the arch supporter of the Mughals. Sher-Shah's advisers declared that a treatise by Shaikh Muhammad called *Risala-i-Mi'rajiyya* smacked of blasphemy and that he deserved capital punishment. In this treatise the Shaikh, enlarging upon the notion of mystic ascension described by Abu Yazid, had claimed that his own mystic ascent enabled him

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 135b.

<sup>2</sup>Abu'l Fazl, *Akbar-nama*, Calcutta, 1877, pp. 155-56; *Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 146a.

<sup>3</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, *Jawahir-i khamisa*, India office MS., f. 69b; *Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 168b.

<sup>4</sup>Beveridge, A.S. tr., *Babur-nama*, II, reprint, New Delhi, 1970, pp. 539-40.



also to visit God and to hold conversations with Him.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus therefore fled to Gujarat, where Humayun remained in touch with him; a letter written by the Emperor to Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and the Shaikh's reply are preserved in the *Gulzar-i-abrar*.

Humayun's letter showed satisfaction at the Shaikh's success in escaping to Gujarat where he was beyond the reach of the 'monstrous' Afghans. The Shaikh called the Emperor's attention to the fact that in order to render august personalities perfect, God endowed them with the *jamal* and *jadal* aspects of His name. In the Emperor's case *jamal* had expired and he had temporarily to experience the hardships associated with *jadal*.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus himself had to face vigorous and trenchant attacks launched by the orthodox 'ulama' and sufis. The leader of the 'ulama' was Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi who wrote a *fatwa* imploring Sultan Mahmud III (943/1537-961/1554) of Gujarat to kill Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus for violation of the *Shari'a* and for heresy. Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus was, however, fortunate in having as his disciple Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din, a highly respected 'alim in Ahmadabad, who visited Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's house and tore up the *fatwa*. Shaikh 'Ali quickly retaliated. He visited Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's house where he tore up the Miyan's robes, demanding an explanation as to why he was assisting heresy and schism in Islam. The Shaikh replied that while the 'ulama' followed the letter of the *Shari'a*, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus followed its spirit. Their feeble understanding was no match for the Shaikh's spiritual perfection. He went on to say that even as far as the letter of the law was concerned, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus was not culpable of sin.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din also wrote rejoinders to the criticisms of the 'ulama',<sup>4</sup> and Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus himself is said to have glossed over his earlier statement regarding his spiritual ascension, assuring the 'ulama' that his mystical ascent took place in a dream and was not to be compared with the Prophet's *mi'raj*.<sup>5</sup> The Sultan took no action against Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. To the orthodox Mulla, 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni, initiation of an 'alim like Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din into the discipleship of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus was in itself a miraculous achievement: Never particularly sympathetic to Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni went to the extent of conceding that all holy men in Delhi, Gujarat and Bengal 'rose from the fringe of his ('Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus') robe.'<sup>6</sup>

After Akbar's accession to the throne Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus left Gujarat and returned to Gwalior and then visited the Emperor's court at

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'ariju'l wilayat*, f. 543a.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 169b.

<sup>3</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 198b.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 553b.

<sup>6</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 4.



Delhi. In 966/1558-59 Bada'uni saw the Shaikh riding through the market-place in Agra. The Shaikh returned the greetings of the many people surrounding him by continually bowing low to the saddle. Mulla Bada'uni was deeply impressed by his humility, especially his respect to beggars before whom he would remain standing. What shocked Bada'uni, however, was the respect shown by the Shaikh to Hindus. Because of this, the self-satisfied Mulla was obliged to deny himself the honour and enjoyment of associating with the Shaikh.<sup>1</sup>

At the imperial court Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus was not extended the kind of reception he anticipated. Power was then centred in the hands of the Khan-i Khanan Bairam Khan, who was Akbar's regent and prime minister and who had previously shown friendship to both sufis and dervishes.<sup>2</sup> However the *sadru's sudur*, Shaikh Gada'i, an eminent Suhrawardiyya<sup>3</sup> sufi, was apprehensive that the Shaikh might gain the confidence of the young Emperor as had his father before him. He was motivated both by religious rivalry and political expediency. This new enemy of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus argued with the Khan-i Khanan that the contents of the Shaikh's *Risala-i Mi'rajiyya* were unorthodox and sinful<sup>4</sup> to such effect that the Shaikh was forced to return to his *khanqah* in Gwalior.

In Gwalior Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus owned vast tracts of land which yielded about a *karor* of *dams* and livestock. The bullocks he had obtained in Gujarat were the most famous in the region. When on a hunt in 966/1559, Akbar visited the Shaikh's *khanqah* in Gwalior. After presenting the Emperor with a number of prize bullocks, the Shaikh symbolically initiated him as a Shattariyya. Akbar however was more interested in the bullocks he had acquired, and the initiation incident became a huge joke<sup>5</sup> in the imperial camp.

On 17 Ramadan 970/10 May 1563 the Shaikh died and was buried in Gwalior. The imposing tomb built over his grave is quite unique in Indo-Muslim architecture and a lasting symbol of the catholicity and tolerance which characterized Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' life.

The work and influence of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus has rightly been regarded as a watershed in the developed and progress of the Shattariyya *silsila*. Both his disciples and his writings left an indelible mark on the history of sufism in India. The *Jawahir-i-Khamsa* is the most significant of his works which include the *Bahru'l-hayat*, the *Kalid-i makhazin* the *Zama'ir*, the *Basai'r*, the *Kanzu'l-Wahdat* and the *Risala-i Mi'rajiyya*.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, p. 289.

<sup>4</sup>*Akbar-nama*, II, p. 89.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 88.

<sup>6</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 173a.



The *Jawahir-i Khamsa* was written in 929/1522-23, and in 956/1549-50<sup>1</sup> at the request of his disciples it was edited and some new material added. It is divided into the following sections known as *Jawahir* (Gems).

1. Forms and methods of worship for devotees.
2. Forms and methods of ascetic practices.
3. Conditions for the invocation of the Great Names of Allah.
4. Discipline of the Shattars.
5. Devotional exercises for eminent mystics who have attained Reality.

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus quoted Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra in his argument supporting the leading role of the Shattariyya among sufi orders. Shaikh Najmu'd-Din Kubra is said to have observed that those who traversed the normal road towards mystic progression (*sa'irin*) chose the journey towards Allah (*sayr ila-Allah*) and that those who flew along it were the *Ta'irin*. The Shattars however adopted the role of lovers of Allah and reached their mystic goals through *jazba* (ecstasy); therefore they were able to achieve in the initial stages of their mystic progression what others obtained at the final stage. The Shattariyya technique, observed Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, could be acquired only after obtaining perfection in the mystic practice of *abrar* and *akhyar* and after mastering the secrets of exorcism by a mysterious invocation of the names of Allah. The Shattars did not have to pass through the stage of *fana'* (evanescence) or the final stage of *fana' al-fana'* (extinction in evanescence). Their mystical progression was designed to efface everything from the heart other than Allah and in its place to develop a contemplative vision of the realization of Allah. Their unitive perception of Allah in their own beings was permanent. This state was described as *baqa' al-baqa'*, the everlasting reintegration of the spirit with Allah. Mystics of other *silsilas* were either conscious of their love for God or experienced ecstasy while the Shattars transcended these two states as separate condition producing a new combination of their own.<sup>2</sup>

The principal techniques for invoking the great names of Allah were known as *jalali* (malevolent) and *jamali* (benevolent). The *jalali* technique required abstinence from such things as meat, fish, eggs, honey, musk, lime and, of course, sex. The *jamali* techniques required the rejection of butter, milk, yoghurt, vinegar, salt and dates. The *jalali* techniques could also be mixed with the *jamali* ones. Those who indulged in such exercises were also required to wear unsewn garments, preferably made of a single length of cloth. They were also warned that by violating the prescribed conditions they endangered their own lives.

According to Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, the *da'wat-i asma'* could be

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 169a.

<sup>2</sup>*Jawahir-i khamsa*, f. 205b.



mastered only under the direction of a perfect guide (*murshid*) who had obtained an incisive perception of exorcism through invoking the names of Allah. At the disposal of a perfect spiritual guide were the services of angels who informed him of the mystical and esoteric secrets of the names of Allah. The perfect spiritual guides, the Shaikh maintained, were those who, after obtaining contemplative vision of the reality of all phenomenal objects, did not become presumptuous and divulge their esoteric perception to anyone untrustworthy. They also refrained from demonstrating the effectiveness of their revelations and miracles. According to Shaikh Muhammad, his own *pir*, Shaikh Zuhur Hajji, was a perfect guide of this calibre.<sup>1</sup>

The principal conditions for embarking on the path of exorcism relating to Allah's names were the following : eating food acquired through legitimate means, truthfulness in speech, humility in the heart, a minimum amount of eating and speaking, loyalty and veracity towards one's spiritual guide, concentration on God, continuous fasting, dissociation from the living and self-seclusion, residing in a clean dark cell, keeping the body unpolluted and in total readiness to subject the ego to discipline and self-torture, eating and drinking from the hands of permanent servants, protecting the eyes from seeing, the ears from hearing and the nose from smelling things which were unlawful, cleansing the heart of envy, pride and rancour, observance of the rules for *jalali* and *jamali* diet, adhering to the rules regarding things prohibited to pilgrims such as self-decoration, the wearing of sewn garments etc.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' successor was his beloved son, Shaikh Budh 'Abdu'llah. Shaikh 'Abdu'llah's mother was a descendant of the well-known Chishtiyya sufi Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar (Baba Farid). He obtained his formal religious education from Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din and Maulana Mubarak Danishmand of Gwalior. After the death of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, Akbar wished to have a tomb built for him, but Shaikh Budh 'Abdu'llah decided to undertake this task himself, drawing on his own resources. He used savings from the *madad-i ma'ash* given to him by the Emperor for this purpose. In view of the lavish structure that was finally built one can only assume that the income from the Shaikh's estate was huge.

Shaikh Budh 'Abdu'llah then entered the imperial military service. Ghausi Shattari reported that Akbar did not wish Shaikh Budh to lead a secluded life and requested him to become a soldier, thus using the spiritual power inherited from his father to further the Emperor's cause. The Shaikh accepted this invitation but, according to Shattari inwardly he remained a dervish. For about forty years he worked loyally in the imperial service and at one stage played the role of ambassador to Mirza

<sup>1</sup>*Jawahir-i khamisa*, ff. 70a-b.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, ff. 73a-b.



Shahrukh of Badakhshan.<sup>1</sup> Because of the soldier's uniform worn by the Shaikh, the Mirza's humility before him astonished the people of Badakhshan. The 'ulama' of the town reacted by putting extremely difficult theological questions to the Shaikh at court but, according to Ghaus Shattari, the Shaikh defeated them in the debate. It is also recorded that local scholars received spiritual sustenance from his presence.

After his accession to the throne, Jahangir accepted Shaikh Budh 'Abdu'llah's resignation from active service because of his advanced years. The Shaikh retired to Gwalior where he spent the remainder of his life meditating and praying close to his father's tomb. It would seem that the income from his *jagir* and his *madad-i ma'ash* grant were insufficient to meet his expenditure. During his life at court he had incurred huge debts and the cash found in the house after his death was insufficient to pay for his burial. Six months before his death he began refusing all food and starved himself, finally dying in 1021/1612-13.<sup>2</sup>

His elder brother, whom Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus passed over as *khalifa*, was Shaikh Nuru'd-Din Ziya'ullah. He obtained a literary and religious education from Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din and learnt *Hadis* under the tutelage of Shaikh Muhammad Tahir Muhaddis of Naharwala. After his father's death he retired to Gwalior but in a short time he went to Agra where he built a *khanqah*.<sup>3</sup> Mulla Bada'uni considered him to be Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' successor and believed that scarcely any sufis of his age could match him in talking about sufism. In his assemblies only matters relating to *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) and asceticism were discussed. In 970/1562-63 Mulla Bada'uni paid him a visit. Apparently the Shaikh's disciples thoughtlessly teased the Mulla, considering him to be an insignificant boy. However they were soon impressed by his conversation, to which the Shaikh replied by delivering an exegesis on the 2nd chapter of the Qur'an. However, Shaikh Ziya'u'llah's esoteric interpretation proved unacceptable to the Mulla and the visit was not a very happy one.

In 1575 the Shaikh and Mulla Bada'uni met again in the 'Ibadat-khana. The Shaikh felt out of his depth in the presence of a great number of skilful debaters. Mulla Bada'uni supported the Shaikh however, and

<sup>1</sup>In 983/1575 Mirza Shahrukh, son of Ibrahim and a grandson of Mirza Sulaiman, seized Badakhshan and forced his grandfather, who was then ruling the country, to take refuge at Akbar's court. Two years later the Mirza sent an ambassador to Akbar's court (*Akbar-nama*, III, p. 210); In return Akbar sent Shaikh Budh 'Abdu'llah and 'Abidi Khwaja as his ambassadors to Mirza Shahrukh in June 1578 (*Akbar-nama*, III, p. 245). The manuscript in the British Museum identifies 'Abdu'llah as the son of Muhammad Ghaus of Gwalior. Beveridge, H. tr., *Akbar-nama*, English translation, Calcutta, 1939, p. 353, n. 4.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, ff. 275a-b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 241b.



thereafter they became friends. But the Mulla's lasting impression of the Shaikh was this :

The Shaikh, although he pretends to refrain from company, which is really self-advertisement, now lives in Agra, in outward appearance, like his father, one of the holy men, while on the contrary he spends his time in self-indulgence and idleness, clad in the raiment of men of rank, and retains his old habits; many strange utterances, calculated to deceive the vulgar, and delivered with apparent simplicity, being reported.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Uwais, another son of Muhammad Ghaus, was well-connected through his mother, who was a descendant of Amir Shah Shirazi who migrated to Gujarat during the reign of Sultan Mahmud Begra (862/1458-917/1511). Amir Shah Shirazi was a contemporary of Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Muhammad Dawani (830/1427-908/1502-3). After completing his education Shaikh Uwais mastered the Shattariyya-*zīkr* outlined in the *Jawahir-i Khamṣa*. He also looked after the *khanqah* and mosque his father had built at Ahmadabad. In 1003/1594-95 Ghausi Shattari called on Shaikh Uwais at Ahmadabad and was encouraged by him to complete his *Gulzar-i abrar*.<sup>2</sup>

Raji Saiyid Mustafa, a son-in-law of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, was a descendant of Saiyid Hamid Shah, an eminent *khalifa* of Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Manikpuri,<sup>3</sup> Raji Saiyid Mustafa bin Saiyid Mubarak bin Saiyid Mahmud bin Saiyid Hamid Shah (d. 989/1581) had a great passion for *sama'*. He was succeeded by his son Raji Saiyid Muhammad. Together the two Saiyids made Manikpur an important centre of the Shattariyya order.<sup>4</sup>

Although Gwalior was a leading Shattariyya pilgrimage centre and a place where the sons of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus enjoyed great prestige, the propagation of *silsila* throughout India was mainly due to the work of the Shaikh's disciples.

One of these was Shaikh Jiwa 'Abdu'l-Ha'i, a leading *kalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, who survived without accepting gifts from well-wishers. When Shaikh Jiwa refused even the grain offered by his *pir* he was threatened with expulsion from the Shaikh's discipleship. Finally however the depth of his austerity increased the respect of his *pir*. Finding crowds of people a hindrance to meditation Shaikh Jiwa began travelling, firstly to Delhi, then Panipat and finally to Bidauli on the banks of the Jamuna. It would seem that it was in Bidauli that he died.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 121-25; English translation, pp. 177-82.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, ff. 327a-28a.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, pp. 263-64.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 203a.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 231a.



Shaikh Lad, also known as Shaikh Wudu'du'llah Shattari, was the son of Shaikh Ma'ruf Siddiqi. A sufi with a deeply ascetic temperament, he spent about twelve years learning the secrets of *zikr* and the technique of the *da'wat-i asma'*, under the guidance of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus before he finally perfected this process. After his *pir's* departure for Gujarat he settled in Ashta, a Malwa village. The conquest of Malwa by Akbar in 968/1561 dispersed the Shaikh's Afghan disciples and he in his turn felt it expedient to migrate to the independent sultanate of Khandesh in 974/1566-67. In 993/1585 he died, aged over a hundred.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad Mutawakkil, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, came from the eastern regions of India. During the reign of Sher-Shah he retired to Ujjain, existing on food offerings from the townsfolk. In 998/1589-90 he died.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Nur Muhammad of Champanir, a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, was a member of the Sunni Bohra community of Gujarat merchants. Before becoming Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' disciple at an advanced age, Shaikh Nur Muhammad distributed his whole wealth which was considerable to beggars. So impressed by this action was his *pir* that, after initiating him into his discipleship, Shaikh Nur Muhammad was also made a *khalifa*. However Shaikh Nur Muhammad retired to the corner of a mosque. He died at Ahmadabad where he was buried.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Makhu (d. 1010/1601-2), another disciple of Shaikh Muhammad, was also an ascetic and celibate. At the age of forty he fell in love with someone called Hansu, who was probably a boy. However the Shaikh's spiritual impact effected his loved one to such an extent that he performed *tauba* (repentance) under his instruction. Originally he came from Gujarat but he had migrated to Zainabad near Burhanpur at the request of the Sultan of Khandesh.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din Zinda Dil (d. 990/1582) was a native of Shiraz. After many travels he became Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' disciple. After the completion of his training his *pir* asked him to disseminate Shattariyya teachings in the Deccan. Frequently he would travel to Gwalior from the Deccan and en route was often the guest of Ghausi Shattari at Mandu.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh Hamid, the son of Shaikh Lad, was from Ahmadabad. So impressed was he by the works of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din in defence of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus that he decided to become the latter's disciple. In his old age he migrated to Burhanpur where he finally died.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 220b-21a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 278b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 203b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 221b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 259b.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 198b.



Shaikh Muhammad Sadru'd-Din Zakir was born in Champanir. His father was a merchant, but at the age of twenty-five Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir renounced the world. In 952/1545-46 he became Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' disciple and accompanied his *pir* when he left Gujarat to live in Gwalior. There he practised the *zikr* and *da'wat-i Asma'* formulae mentioned in the *Jawahir-i Khamsa*. Finding him perfect in all this, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus allowed him to leave his *khanqah* and settle in Gujarat. Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir visited his *pir* at Gwalior and twice more made the journey after the latter's death. On the last occasion he remained there a year engaged in performing the rigorous ascetic exercises of several courses of *chilla*. He also visited Mandu where he enrolled a number of people into his discipleship. Among those who called on the Shaikh was the future author of the *Gulzar-i abrār*, then only eleven years old. From Mandu, Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir returned to Champanir, but finally he settled in Barauda. There he died in 989/1581-82. Until his last day his enthusiasm for severe ascetic exercises was limitless. According to Ghausi Shattari, Gujarat abounded with *khalifas* and disciples of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir.<sup>1</sup> Among these was Shaikh Siddiq of Barauda, a sufi of deeply ascetic temperament. The son of a druggist, he succeeded to his father's profession after the latter's death. Before long, however, he renounced the world to become a disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir. Impressed by his services Shaikh Sadru'd-Din appointed Shaikh Siddiq his *khalifa*. He died at Barauda in 996/1587-8 or 997/1588-89.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Zuhuru'd-Din Mahmud bin Jalal of Gujrat was a disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and a *khalifa* of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir, as well as a patron of Ghausi Shattari. For many years he devotedly served his *pir*, obtaining from him authority to initiate disciples at Mandu. For about ten years the population of this town benefited from his spiritual expertise. On 18 Sha'ban 996/13 July 1588 he died. His *khalifas* elected 'Aqibat Mahmud Shaikh Da'wud to succeed their *pir*. 'Aqibat Mahmud however, chose to live mostly with Shaikh 'Abdu'llah and Shaikh Ziya'u'llah, the sons of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. After their deaths he returned to Mandu in 1020/1611-12.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif, the son of Malik Shah Kori, was also a disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir. Born at Nahrwala he was trained in the Shattariyya *zikr* at Champanir. In 977/1569-70 he visited the tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and stayed in the *khanqah* of Shaikh Ghaus. From Gwalior he visited Delhi in order to perform a pilgrimage to the tomb of the sufis of Delhi before going on to Agra. After receiving great spiritual assistance from Shaikh Ziya'u'llah he returned to Gwalior and

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrār*, ff. 201a-b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 217a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 215a.



performed *chillas* in the cells where Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus had meditated when a youth. He also obtained spiritual benefit from Shaikh 'Abdu'llah, the son and successor of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. He then returned to Champanir and later stayed at Barauda. There he married, but in 984/1576-77 he visited Gwalior again *via* Mandu. Although he had decided to refrain from further travelling he changed his mind and went from Barauda to Burhanpur. He died in Barauda in 1007/1598-99.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ji Barahna (naked) from Ahmadabad, a disciple of Shaikh Sadru'd-Din Zakir, was primarily a *majzub* (ecstatic). In 983/1575-76 he paid a visit to the tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and from thence returned to his native land.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh-i Lashkar Muhammad 'Arif, the son of Malik Rajan, came from Mahlasa, Gujarat. Orphaned at an early age, at sixteen he followed family tradition and became a military man, but soon abandoned this for the life of a mystic. Initially he was trained by Shaikh Zakir Naharwala, a Shattariyya sufi, but in 951/1544-45 he entered into the discipleship of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and was later appointed a *khalifa*. After his *pir*'s departure for Gwalior, Shaikh-i Lashkar initiated disciples into the Shattariyya order at Ahmadabad until 982/1574-75. He migrated to Burhanpur where he died on 2 Shawwal 993/27 September 1585.<sup>3</sup>

The most outstanding of all the *khalifas* of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus was Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Ahmad, the son of Shaikh Nasru'llah 'Alawi. He was born in Gujarat in 902/1496-97. Between the age of five and thirty-eight his time was devoted to the acquisition of higher education in all branches of religious, literary and philosophical subjects. He then began leading a retired life and at the same time tutored a number of disciples. He never willingly visited the worldly people, performing even his Friday congregational prayers with his disciples in the private mosque attached to his house. After obtaining initiation into the Shattariyya order he became an enthusiastic supporter of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, assisting in establishing the Shattariyya order on a sound basis from Gujarat to Burhanpur. Although he converted his seminary into a *khanqah* he never lost his deep interest in teaching and writing scholarly commentaries on the works of *Tafsir*, *Hadis Fiqh* and *Kalam*. On 29 Safar 997/17 January 1589 he died in Ahmadabad.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'llah, the son of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din, was also a scholar and a sufi. After his father's death he took over his teaching duties. He was ascetic to the degree that he would only eat sugarcandy and a cup of

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 265a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid.*, f. 274b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid.*, f. 207b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid.*, f. 231b-32a. According to Bada'uni, the Shaikh died in 998/1589-90.



syrup water. To support himself he copied manuscripts. Akbar's foster brother Mirza 'Aziz Koka, believed that he had gained his victory over Sorath in 999/1591 due to the Shaikh's spiritual power.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Yusuf of Bengal was a disciple of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din. From his native land he travelled to Ahmadabad to obtain higher religious education. There he became the disciple of the Shaikh who ordered him to live in Burhanpur. There Shaikh Yusuf tutored disciples in theology but he refrained from training them in sufism.<sup>2</sup> One of his disciples, Shaikh Pir Muhammad (the son of 'Abdu'l-Halim of Burhanpur), developed into an ascetic of such stature that he refused to visit even the ruler of Khandesh.<sup>3</sup>

Another noteworthy *khalifa* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's was from Bubakan village in Siwistan (Sind). He was Hakim 'Usman bin Shaikh 'Ayni. Many important scholars were his disciples. In 983/1575-76 he migrated from Gujarat to Burhanpur; where many scholars attended his lectures. For approximately twenty-seven years he taught in his seminary. In 1008/1599-1600 Akbar's invasion of Burhanpur prompted him to take refuge in a jungle near the village which he held as *madad-i ma'ash*. There he and his dervish followers were murdered by local tribesmen.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Kamal Muhammad 'Abbasi (d. 10 Sha'ban 1013/1 January 1605), a *khalifa* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din was a scholar of *Hadis*. In 982/1574-75 he migrated from Ahmadabad to Ujjain. There he married a girl from an eminent sufi family of Kalpi. For about thirty years he lectured on theology and wrote *fatwas* based on the rulings of the '*ulama*'.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Sufi Shattari, another eminent disciple of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din and Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, was a native of Sandila near Lucknow. He was born on 12 Rabi' II 924/23 April 1518, and obtained his early education in his own home-town and Bada'un. From Bada'un he travelled to Delhi and then to Gujarat. There he obtained higher education from scholars including Wajihu'd-Din. He studied the *Fusus al-Hikam* under Maulana Lutfu'llah Rumi, who authorized him to impart the teaching of that great work. After becoming an ascetic in 950/1543-44 he took Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus as his *pir*. For about ten years he trained other disciples of his *pir*. On pilgrimage to Mecca, he decided to stay for five years in Medina, visiting Mecca on an annual pilgrimage. He married after returning to Ahmadabad, and remained there for some fifteen years. In 980/1572-73 he left for Gwalior and spent two years caring for the tomb of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. In 983/

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, ff. 266a-b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 206b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 266b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 252b.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, ff. 262b-63a.



1575-76 he returned to leading a quiet life in Agra where he died on 23 Jumada I 1002/14 February 1594.

During his life-time Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Sufi Shattari wrote prolifically; some of his works listed by Ghausi Shattari are; *Siraju's-salikin*, *Awrad-i sufiyya*, *Risala-i sufiyya*, *Anisu'l-musafirin*, *Asraru'd-da'wat*, *Sharh-i risali-i Ghausiyya*, *Risala-i kanzu'l-asrar* and *Hall-i ashghal-i Shattar*. All these works were commentaries on the books of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and were designed to disseminate the principal teachings of his *pir*.

Shaikh 'Abdu'llah compared a sufi with a flame which was undisturbed by accidents and also with a drunkard who did not lose consciousness by constantly partaking of the cup of (Divine) love. After drinking the entire ocean of (Divine) love he still remained unsatiated. A *faqir* (dervish) should avoid the company of the rich, said Shaikh 'Abdu'llah, and constantly struggle for spiritual progress, not accepting any remedy prescribed for his restlessness. He should not tarry at any one station along his voyage to spiritual perfection. His success depended on his fulfilling three achievements; the piety and self-purification of the Firdausiyyas, the affluence of the Suhrawardiyyas and the meditation of the Shattariyyas. Such gifts as revelation and miraculous powers were not attained through spiritual exercises alone, but through purification of the self. *Fana'* and *baqa'* came from meditation and contemplation. Finally, without cutting asunder the chains that bound the self, a sufi was unable to attain *unio-mystica*.<sup>1</sup>

One of Shaikh 'Abdu'llah's disciples, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahid, (d. 1017/1608-09) was also a sufi and a scholar. As a youth he had been initiated into the Chishtiyya order, and had also received instruction from Mir 'Abdu'l-Awwal. At the age of thirty he fell into a mystic ecstasy and did not regain consciousness for about three years. It is believed that for about twenty-seven years he drank no water,<sup>2</sup> although he ate food.

A *khalifa* of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din who settled in Lahore was Saiyid Abu Turab, also known as Shah Gada, who came from Shiraz. He became Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's disciple in Gujarat as well as being initiated by his *pir* into the Qadiriyya order. In Lahore, Saiyid Abu Turab had six *khalifas*: four of these remained in Lahore, while one went to Delhi and the other to Rohtas. On 14 Shawwal 1071/12 June 1661 the Saiyid died in Lahore where he is buried.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Wali Muhammad, an uncle of Shaikh Lashkar Muhammad 'Arif was born in the Champanir fort. In the beginning of his career he was a disciple of Shaikh Qutb-i Jahan Zakir of Naharwala.<sup>4</sup> Later he obtained

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 257b-58a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 274b.

<sup>3</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 353-55.

<sup>4</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 207a.



initiation into the Shattariyya order from Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus at Ahmadabad. In 982/1574-75 he migrated to Burhanpur where he died five years later. The emphasis on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in his mystic perception prompted him to perceive the Essence as veiled in attributes of every particle of the universe.<sup>1</sup>

One of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif's disciples, Shaikh Ibrahim Qare Shattari, was a Sindi who was an excellent calligrapher and wrote different types of scripts very competently. In the company of his *pir* he visited Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus. For about eighteen years he acted as *imam* (leader) of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' congregational prayers. In 991/1583 he died at Burhanpur.<sup>2</sup>

Among Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif's disciples, Qazi Mahmud of Murbi (a village in Gujarat) was known to be a great scholar.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Mahmud bin 'Abdu'llah Gujarati, another disciple of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif, was for several years deeply in love with the son of a Hindu dancer. The Shaikh's success in subsequently Islamizing the boy was a matter of great satisfaction to the orthodox. The Shaikh died in 1004/1595-96.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad, who was known as Shaikh Tajul-'Ashiqin the son of 'Abdu'llah Sindi, another disciple of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif, was born at Burhanpur. After conquering Khandesh in 1008/1600, Akbar imprisoned the Shaikh on the charge of supporting the sultans of Khandesh. The intercession of the Shaikh's friends, particularly of a leading noble Qulich Khan, prompted Akbar to release him at Agra. Qulich Khan took the Shaikh to Lahore where he was killed by the army of a rebellious Rajput chief on 1 Jumada I 1013/25 September 1604.<sup>5</sup>

The most illustrious disciple and *khalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif was Shaikh 'Isa (d. 1031/1621-22) the son of Shaikh Qasim Sindi. He was born at Irijpur, the capital of Berar. After his mother's death his uncle gave him the name 'Isa, and took him into his care. Early in 981/1573-74 his father also died and 'Isa's uncle migrated with him to Burhanpur. Four years later Shaikh 'Isa travelled to Mandu, Gwalior and Agra to study with a number of Shattariyya scholars and sufis. After his return to Burhanpur he became the disciple and *khalifa* of Shaikh-i Lashkar Muhammad 'Arif.<sup>6</sup> He was a passionate devotee of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, having closely studied Ibn 'Arabi's works which he staunchly defended. Because of this Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah Burhanpuri called him *ibahiyya* and *zindiq* (heretic and infidel).

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 198a; Muhammad Baqa, *Riyazu'l-auliya*, British Museum MS. nr 1745, f. 150b.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 206b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 211a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 247a.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 263a.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, f. 285a; Muhammad Baqa, *Riyazu'l-auliya*, f. 150b.



Shaikh 'Isa wrote a number of works explaining the theories of Ibn 'Arabi. One of these is the *Anwaru'l-asrar*, a Qur'anic exegesis which is designed to demonstrate that the seeds of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn 'Arabi can be found in verses of the Qur'an which the commentators of the Divine revelation who took them literally could barely understand. His *Rauzatu'l-husna* and *'Aynu'l-ma'ani* explained in detail the ninety-nine names of Allah. For example, he argued that the significance of the name of Allah was not contained in the letters used for these exalted names. The Reality of Allah in its primordial absoluteness was unknowable; what appeared as His heavenly or earthly theophany was the determined form of *Rabb* (Lord) of spirits.<sup>1</sup> He was the source of all exoteric and esoteric attributes as well as the source of all being. Here are two of his verses on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* theme :

Verse

Were the heart of a single drop to be dissected,  
From out of it comes hundreds of clear oceans.  
All gods; all beloveds, all actors and all universalities are the theophany  
of His attributes, it is immaterial if the god is of stone or wood.

Verse

In the temple they do not worship other than Thou,  
One may prostrate either before stone, clay or wood.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Isa also wrote a commentary on the *Insan al-Kamil* by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Jili, books on the Shattari forms of *zikr* and exorcism, and a commentary on the *Jawahir-i khamisa*. He argued that the neophyte, imagining the form of the *murshid* (guide) in his heart, should repeat the name Rahman (the Merciful) non-stop for hours until, when his tongue was exhausted, mercy was all around him. He should then control his breath and keep his eyes open so that his eyesight was dazzled. The second Method of recollecting the name Rahman was to repeat it either on the tongue or in the heart, believing Reality to be omnipresent and omniscient, and at the same time believing that all phenomenal objects are manifestations of the Real Being. When the sufi who was performing this *zikr* closed his eyes he perceived his own self as the esoteric form of all phenomenal objects.<sup>3</sup>

Among Shaikh 'Isa's disciples, the most outstanding figure was Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din, the son of Kabir Muhammad. His father was a Siddiqi Shaikh and his mother a Saiyid. Burhanu'd-Din was born in a village in Khandesh and educated at Burhanpur. Before completing his theological and literary education, his mystical leanings prompted him to become Shaikh 'Isa's disciple. He was trained by the Shaikh for about eleven

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 533b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 561a, from the *'Aynu'l-ma'ani*.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 563b.



years. In true sufi disciplinary style he was so totally self-effacing in the service of his *pir*, that he even provided dried clay clods for the Shaikh's lavatory. Gradually he gathered around him people of all religious persuasions who believed him to be a great miracle-worker.

Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din refused to allow princes to visit him. Although Aurangzib, who was famed for his orthodoxy, was viceroy of the Deccan between 1045/1636 to 1053/1644 and from 1062/1652 to 1067/1657, the Shaikh refused to make him an exception in this respect. When Aurangzib was preparing to march against Dara-Shukoh he went to the Shaikh in disguise to be blessed by him. Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din asked the visitor's name, and the Prince answered 'Aurangzib' simply. To this the Shaikh neither replied nor by way of blessing offered him a gift. When the Prince returned the following day the Shaikh angrily said that if he found his house so attractive he would vacate it and find a new abode for his dervishes and himself. Later Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din relented and agreed that the Prince could see him outside the doors of his *khanqah* when he went for prayers, and he (the Shaikh) would recite *fatiha* (prayers) in order to bid him farewell.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to this indifference to the powerful, we find the Shaikh extending a warm reception to the religious. For example in 1665, Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi Qasuri who accompanied Aurangzib's viceroy, Mirza Raja Jai Singh to Burhanpur was treated with kindness and affection by Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din. The great Shaikh requested Shaikh 'Abdu'llah to visit him once or twice a day. Retiring to a private cell, Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din taught Shaikh 'Abdu'llah some special forms of Shattariyya *zikr* and allowed him to teach both *zikr* and the formulae of invocation mentioned in the *Jawahir-i khamisa* and in the treatises of Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din.<sup>2</sup>

In their quest for the annihilation of their individuality in their *pir* while in a state of mystic intoxication, the Shaikh's disciples addressed him as God. When the Shaikh found himself unable to stop this dangerous development he imprisoned them in the *khanqah*. Some recanted, but those who refused were sent to the local Qazi in order to be dealt with according to the Shari'a. After imprisoning them the Qazi attempted to persuade them to give up their alleged blasphemous outbursts, but was finally forced to have them executed.

In the 22nd year of Aurangzib's reign (1678-79) Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din died lamented by a large number of people in Burhanpur.<sup>3</sup> In his *Samaratu'l-hayat* Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din wrote that Divine grace was dependent on good manners and illustrated his point by giving the

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, pp. 553-54.

<sup>2</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 565b-66a.

<sup>3</sup>*Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, p. 555.



example of Iblis (the Devil) who was excluded from Divine favour only because he had failed to show good manners.

The Shaikh contended, 'whenever someone is living like an ecstatic I would like to follow suit while continuing to pray. I also pray to God to guide the ecstatics to offer prayers.'<sup>1</sup>

The author of the *Khazinatu'l-asfiya* included Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif (d. 1066/1655-56) among a list of Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din's disciples. According to Khafi-Khafi the Shaikh strictly adhered to the *Shari'a* loathing *sama'* and music. No marriage procession was allowed to pass by his *khanqah* playing music. Aurangzib was deeply devoted to him.<sup>2</sup> In the beginning Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif dubbed Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din a *bid'ati* (sinful innovator) but the latter would counter this by saying that he thanked God he was the contemporary of such a devotee of the *Sharia* as Shaikh Burhan ud-Din.<sup>3</sup> The Shaikh disliked the disciples of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid) and Shaikh Adam Banuri, accusing them of *ilhad* (heresy) and *zindiq*a (infidelity) and asserting it was unlawful to offer prayers behind them. He also discouraged pilgrimages to Mecca, affirming that they prevented people from performing their obligatory religious duties and that it was more advisable for people to stay at home.<sup>4</sup> According to Khafi-Khan, as an old man Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif also developed an attachment to Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din although it is not mentioned whether he became Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din's disciple or *khalifa*.<sup>5</sup> The author of the *Khazinatu'l-asfiya*, however, firmly states that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif was a *khalifa* of Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din and gives biographical notes on Shaikh Fath Shah Sarmast Shattari, a disciple of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif. Shaikh Fath was appointed by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif as a *khalifa* in Lahore. Shaikh Fath died in 1150/1737-38 and was buried outside Lahore.<sup>6</sup>

Lahore was the home of Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf Shattari, a suc-

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 566b.

<sup>2</sup>*Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, p. 556; Shaikh Muhammad Baqa, *Mir'atu'l-'alama*, British Museum MS. Add. 7657, f. 448a; *Riyazu'l-auliya*, f. 151a. The Shaikh's indifference to accepting gifts is borne out by the following letter to his son Prince Muhammad A'zam; "Once we paid a visit to Miyan 'Abdu'l-Latif (May his grave be hallowed!). During the conversation we said that if the Shaikh permitted he (Aurangzib) could assign some villages in Kharkon (in modern Madhya Pradesh) for the expenditure of the *khanqah*. The following verse was uttered by the Shaikh's truth-expounding tongue.

To us he gives villages and lays us under obligation,  
The giver of daily bread (God) gives us daily bread unconditionally.  
*Kalimat-itaiyibat*, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, Suppl. Pars. 477, ff. 9b-10a.

<sup>3</sup>*Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, p. 556.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 646a.

<sup>5</sup>*Muntakhabu'l-lubab*, p. 556.

<sup>6</sup>*Khazinatu'l-asfiya*, II, pp. 368-69.



cessor of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus' disciple, Shaikh Farid of Kahirwal. He excelled other contemporary sufis in his knowledge of the *da'wat-i asma'*. At Aurangzib's invitation he became a frequent visitor to court and his sons were given villages as *madad-i ma'ash* by the Emperor. The Shaikh built an imposing mosque near his house from the proceeds of imperial gifts. His death occurred some time after 1078/1667. A son and successor of Shaikh Farid of Kahirwal, was an ascetic who lived in Sirhind. Accompanied by his friend, Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, the latter was another frequent visitor of Emperor Aurangzib.<sup>1</sup>

In the reigns of both Shahjahan and Aurangzib, leading Shattari saints enjoyed considerable respect. K.A. Nizami's conclusion that :

We do not come across any reference to the *Shattari* saints during the reigns of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. The stage was then dominated by the *Naqshbandis* and the *Qadiris*. The *Shattari Silsilah* was a spent bullet in the seventeenth century. Its pantheistic philosophy and catholicism was (sic) mercilessly criticised by the school of Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Sani.<sup>2</sup>

is based on an inadequate perception of the history of the Shattariyyas. Not only were Burhanpur, Gujarat, Malwa and Bengal important Shattariyya centres in the seventeenth century but, as will be seen in Chapter Six, the influence of the order was spread as far away as Mecca, Medina, Syria and Indonesia.

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'atu'l-'alam*, f. 449b; *Riyazu'l-'auliya'*, f. 95a.

<sup>2</sup>Nizami, K.A., *The Shattari saints and their attitude towards the state, Medieval India Quarterly*, Aligarh, I, no. 2, p. 67.



## Chapter Four

### The Naqshbandiyya Order

THE first volume of this work traced the origin of the *Silsila-i Khwajagan* in Central Asia. Later it was reorganized by Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband (718/1318-791/1389) after whom the *silsila* came to be called the Naqshbandiyya.<sup>1</sup> His tomb, known as the Qasr i-'Arifan, near Bukhara, grew into a thriving rendezvous for sufis and other Muslims. The rulers of Central Asia with great devotion invoked the blessings of his spirit. Later Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband's disciples established a network of Naqshbandiyya centres throughout Central Asia and in Herat, Balkh and Badakshan.

The Indian Naqshbandiyyas traced their spiritual descent from Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar,<sup>2</sup> a prominent successor of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din's disciple, Ya'qub Charkhi. Khwaja Ahrar was born in Ramazan 806/March-April 1404. His parents came from a devout farming family in Baghistan, a village in a valley near Tashkent. Prior to his birth his parents had migrated to Tashkent where they lived in the vicinity of the tomb of Imam Abu Bakr Qaffal Shashi.<sup>3</sup> There the

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 95-97.

<sup>2</sup>The most prominent among the ancestors of Khwaja Ahrar's mother was Shaikh 'Umar Baghistani, who had obtained initiation in the order of Shaikh Abu'n-Najib Suhrawardi. Shaikh 'Umar's *pir* Shaikh Hasan hailed from Nakhchivan in Azarbayjan region of Iran, had travelled widely, visiting both Bulghar in the southern Russian steppes and Bukhara. In Bukhara, Shaikh 'Umar came in close contact with Shaikh Hasan. On 22 Rabi' I 698/28 December 1298, Shaikh Hasan died and was buried at Surkhab in Tabriz. Shaikh 'Umar and his disciple led the retired life of an ascetic and encouraged Muslims to lead a pious life, attending to their household duties rather than dedicating themselves to sufism.

Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah's father, Khwaja Mahmud Shashi, and grandfathers, were also sufis and were closely associated with the Naqshbandiyya disciples of Shaikh 'Umar. Husain al-Wa'iz Kashifi, *Rashahat 'ani'l-hayat*, Lucknow, 1912, pp. 208-20.

<sup>3</sup>Imam Abu Bakr 'Abdu'llah b. Ahmad b. 'Abudu'llah al-Qaffal al-Marwazi was a native of Marw and later settled in Shash (Tashkent). In his youth he worked as a locksmith, and even his great intellectual distinction as a Shafi'i doctor did not prevent him from carrying on as a locksmith (*qaffal*). He wrote some important works on Shafi'i law; among his disciples were such eminent personalities as Abu 'Ali, Qazi



Khwaja spent his childhood and adolescence, taking little interest in formal studies, his main interest being the local sufis. He spent most of his days at the tombs of Imam Abu Bakr Qaffal and of another sufi, Shaikh Khawand Tahir,<sup>1</sup> only a short distance from his home. He also frequently visited the tomb of another local sufi, Shaikh Zainu'd-Din which was much further away.<sup>2</sup>

Nasiru'd-Din's parents were naturally concerned about the future of their boy. When he was twenty-two his maternal uncle took him to Samarqand to expose him to a new intellectual environment and to enable him to become an 'alim. There Nasiru'd-Din again neglected his literary and theological studies, dedicating himself mostly to mystical exercises. By the standards of contemporary 'alims he was considered poorly educated. Meanwhile, however, he himself found great satisfaction in the company of the disciples of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband. During this period he travelled to Bukhara to visit the Naqshbandiyya disciples there.

Two years later Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar went *via* Marw to Herat where the ruler at the time was Mirza Shāhrukh (807/1405-850/1447). In a highly impoverished state, the Khwaja lived in a number of different seminaries in Herat in turn.<sup>3</sup> In spite of his difficulties, the company of leading resident sufis and those who temporarily visited Herat gave him profound satisfaction. After four years he set off for Hisar *via* Balkh in order to meet Maulana Ya'qub Charkhi,<sup>4</sup> a distingui-

Husain and Abu Muhammad al-Juwaini, the father of the Imam al-Harmain. (Mac Guckin de Slane, *Ibn Khallikan's biographical dictionary*, II, New York and London 1843, p. 26). The great sufi Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair (357/967-440/1049, *HST*, pp. 68-72) also studied *Fiqh* under Shaikh Abu Bakr (Muhammad bin Munawwar, *Asraru't-tawhid*, 2nd edition, Tehran, 1348/1969, pp. 24, 99). According to the *Maqamat-i Shaikh Abu Bakr Qaffal*, the Shaikh followed a very organized routine in his life: one year fighting against the infidels in Turkey, the second year going on pilgrimage and the third year disseminating knowledge. It is said that he followed this routine of cycles for the last sixty years of his life (*Rashahat*, p. 206). Ibn Khallikan says that he died in 417/1026-27 at the age of ninety and was buried in Sijistan. However his tomb in Shash (Tashkent) is very famous, and was rebuilt by 'Abdu'llah Khan Uzbek (991/1583-1006/1598). Its original dome has been replaced by an artificial metal one, and the area around the tomb is still an important Islamic centre in communist Tashkent.

<sup>1</sup>Shaikh Khawand Tahir was the eldest son of Shaikh 'Umar Baghistani and was initiated into the *silsla-i Khwajgan* by a disciple of the family of Khwaja Ahmad Yasawi, who was a successor of Khwaja Yusuf Hamadani (d. 535/1140-41). Shaikh Khawand Tahir had travelled to Bukhara and Khwarazm and wrote some treatises on sufism which do not survive. His tomb in the heart of old Tashkent is in a good state of repair and is surrounded by imposing industrial and commercial complexes.

<sup>2</sup>*Rashahat*, pp. 223-24.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 224-27, 232-34.

<sup>4</sup>Maulana Ya'qub bin 'Usman bin Mahmud bin Muhammad Ghaznawi, born at



ished *khalifa* of Khwaja Baha'ud-Din Naqshband, and was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya order by him. The Maulana trained the Khwaja in the Naqshbandiyya *zikr* of *nafi-o isbat*, also known as the *Wuquf-i 'Adadi*<sup>1</sup> and advised him to imprint mystically on his disciples the impact of his personality and to engender in them the ecstatic love of the Divine.

The Khwaja's initiation by the Maulana was a mere formality, as the company of a number of eminent disciples of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din, and his own self-mortification and mystical exercises, had already made him perfect. Maulana Ya'qub's senior disciples were annoyed by his favouring of the Khwaja whom he considered to be like a lamp ready with oil and wick; a lamp which only required lighting.<sup>2</sup>

After three months with his *pir*, Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar returned to Herat and later, at the age of twenty-nine, he returned to Tashkent where he resumed control of his small ancestral farm. Gradually the farm, supporting both agriculture and livestock, prospered. His popularity also increased, and he built a vast *khanqah*, a *madrasa* and a *Jami'* mosque in Tashkent. Farkat, the suburb of Tashkent where he generally lived, became the centre of his spiritual activity.

The Timurid prince, Sultan Abu Sa'id bin Muhammad bin Miranshah bin Timur (855/1451-873/1469) is said to have sought the Khwaja's blessing before marching against Samarqand in 855/1451. This was given on condition that Sultan would strengthen adherence to the *Shari'a* and promote the welfare of his subjects. The Khwaja accompanied the Sultan on his campaign, offering both military and spiritual assistance against his enemy, Mirza 'Abdu'llah of Samarqand. After Sultan Abu Sa'id's victory over Samarqand, the Khwaja moved there from Tashkent.<sup>3</sup>

The encouragement given by the Khwaja enabled Sultan Abu Sa'id to repulse the invasion of Samarqand by another Timurid prince, Mirza Abu'l-Qasim Babur (853/1449-861/1457), a grandson of Mirza Shah-rukh. It was through the Khwaja's mediation that the truce was finally concluded in 1454. Throughout the reign of Sultan Abud Sa'id, the Khwaja remained a tower of strength to him. He urged the Sultan to

Charkh (a village near Ghazni), was also the author of a commentary on the Qur'an. He died in 838/1434-5 and was buried in a village near Hisar-Shadman (now Dushanbe in Tajikistan. U.S.S.R.).

<sup>1</sup>This is one of the three principles of sufi discipline which Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din added to the eight other principles invented by Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Khaliq Ghujduwani. *HSI*, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup>*Rashahat*, pp. 241-42. *Nafahatu'l-uns*, pp. 398-99. The story is a stock-in-trade sufi anecdote and is also ascribed to Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi. *HSI*, p. 190.

<sup>3</sup>*Rashahat*, pp. 289-92. Anonymous History of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar, Dushanbe MS., 548/I, f. 4b.



introduce reforms beneficial to the peasants and the merchants.<sup>1</sup> It would seem that Sultan Abu Sa'id and his successor gave the Khwaja considerable gifts of farming property which, like his original farm, prospered under his management. According to the *Rashahat*, the Khwaja owned more than 1030 hamlets; and 'Abdu'r-Rahman Jami referred to the affluence of the Khwaja in his *masnawis*, *Yusuf-Zulaikha* and the *Tuhfatu'l-Ahrar*. The *Samarqand Documents* of the XV-XVI Centuries, recently published in Moscow, confirm that the Khwaja's property extended the whole way from Tashkent to Samarqand. Besides agricultural and grazing land, his assets included orchards, houses, shops, mills, agricultural implements and utensils. Later *khanqahs*, *madrasas* and mosques were also added to these. More than fifty slaves, mostly Indian, worked in the main *khanqah*.<sup>2</sup> Even Jami mentioned Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah's wealth in one of his verses :

Beat the monarchical kettle-drum

The splendour of the *faqr* (dervish-hood) of 'Ubaidu'llah<sup>3</sup>

On one occasion the Khwaja paid 250,000 *dinars* and on another 70,000 *dinars* to 'Umar Shaikh Mirza (the father of Emperor Babur and a son of Sultan Abu Sa'id) to relieve the Muslims of Tashkent of a large part of their tax burden. But despite his astronomical wealth the Khwaja's life-style was reminiscent of that of the lowliest dervish in his *khanqah*. The farms he acquired were left under the control of their original cultivators, who paid double tithes (*'ushr*) to the state.<sup>4</sup> Such paternalistic management was mainly responsible for the prosperity of those farms, although the hagiologists ascribed their abundant production to the Khwaja's blessing. All revenue from his extensive holdings was put into a *waqf* (religious endowment) for the benefit of members of his *madrasas*, *khanqahs*, and mosques, and of sufis, 'ulama' and travellers as well as deprived Muslims in general.

On 29 Rabi' I 895/20 Feb. 1490, Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar died in Samarqand and was buried in his *khanqah*. No tomb was erected. A high platform (later accommodating other family graves) and a tall beautifully-carved tablet were the only marks indicating the last resting-place of such a great sufi.

Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din was survived by a large number of disciples from a variety of professional and social backgrounds. Among his

<sup>1</sup>Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Haqq, *Sukhunan-i Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar*, Tashkent MS., no. 3735, ff. 164b, 202a, 211a; Letters of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar, Dushanbe MS., 548/21, ff. 197b-99B.

<sup>2</sup>Hekhovich, O.D., *Samarqand documents XV-XVI century*, Moscow, 1975, nos. 10, 11.

<sup>3</sup>*Rashahat*, p. 292.

<sup>4</sup>*Samarqand documents*, no. 16; *Maqamat-i Khwaja Ahrar*, Tashkent MS., no. 8537, f. 13a.



princely followers, 'Umar Shaikh Mirza was his most enthusiastic disciple and his son, Babur, was also a life-long devotee of the Khwaja's, drawing inspiration from his spirit and teachings. The Khwaja's sons also remained friendly with Sultan Abu Sa'id's descendants rather than with their Uzbek rivals. In 901/1495-96, Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah's eldest son, Khwajagi Khwaja, protected Baysonghor Mirza, a grandson of Sultan Abu Sa'id, against an invasion of Samarqand by Sultan Mahmud of Tashkent.<sup>1</sup> In 905/1499-1500 Khwaja Muhammad Yahya, the younger son of Khwaja Ahrar, made an abortive attempt to get Babur in Samarqand, but failed.<sup>2</sup> On 15 Muharram 906/11 August 1500, Shaibani Khan Uzbek, who seized Samarqand from the Timurids, banished Muhammad Yahya and all his family from their home and seized the property of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. A band of 300 Uzbeks attacked Khwaja Yahya and his party *en route* to exile, and he and his two sons were killed.<sup>3</sup>

In 950/1543 a portion of this property was returned to the remaining members of the Khwaja's family by 'Abdu'l-Latif Bahadur Khan bin Kuchkinji Khan of Samarqand.<sup>4</sup> The real mark left by Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar on the pages of history was in the form of his teachings, so successfully disseminated by his disciples. He advocated that the transient was effaced when the reality of love appeared from the heart and entirely burnt out the imaginary existence of things other than God or His attributes. In that situation the love of the devotee assumed the quality of a mirror and nothing but the Beloved was reflected in it. Seekers of *Tawhid* should strive to dedicate themselves to the Prophet Muhammad, so much so that their entire selves, including their hearts and their spirits, were free of thoughts other than of God.<sup>5</sup> A devotee should strike his heart with the *kalima* of *Tawhid* which was as hard as steel so that Divine love could emerge from the heart, ravaging all else but God.<sup>6</sup> A *wali* (sufi saint) was the repository of the theophany of Divine names and attributes. Only Divine grace could give the mystic state permanency and endow the heart with the vision of Being.<sup>7</sup>

Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar reminded his followers that Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani (659/1261-736/1336) had rejected certain statements of Ibn 'Arabi while extolling others. One of his statements much admired by Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula was this.

<sup>1</sup>Beveridge, A.S. tr., *Babur-nama*, I, reprint, New Delhi, 1970, p. 62; *Shaibani-nama*, Tashkent MS., p. 131.

<sup>2</sup>*Shaibani-nama*, Tashkent MS., p. 131.

<sup>3</sup>*Babur-nama*, pp. 124-25.

<sup>4</sup>*Samarqand documents*, no. 16.

<sup>5</sup>*Fiqrat-i hazrat wilayat-panah*, Tashkent MS., f. 54b.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, f. 90b.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, f. 56b.



The *makr*<sup>1</sup> (scheme) of Allah is a blessing for the common people, howsoever they are involved in sinful and prohibited practices. To the spiritual élite the same *makr* is the source of permanency of their mystic states, howsoever they abandon manners.<sup>2</sup>

Once a sufi put to the Khwaja the following question: 'The eminent sufis have remarked that there is no Being except the Absolute Being. They add that the Primal One is manifested behind all existence. If this is true, the disputes between Islam and infidelity are inexplicable.' The Khwaja quoted in reply the following two verses of Maulana Rumi:

'Since colourlessness (Pure Unity or the Absolute) became the captive of colour (manifestation in the phenomenal world), a Moses came into conflict with a Moses.

When you attain unto the colourlessness which you (originally) possessed, Moses and Pharaoh are at peace (with each other).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Qur'an says: 'And they (the disbelievers) schemed (*makr*) and Allah schemed (against them); and Allah is the best of schemers' (III, 54).

<sup>2</sup>*Figarat-i hazrat wilayat-panah*, f. 74b.

<sup>3</sup>*Rashahat*, p. 284. The above are verses no. 2466 and 2467, Book I, in the *Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, I, edited by R.A. Nicholson, London, 1925, p. 152 lines 366, 367, English translation by R.A. Nicholson, *Mathnawi*, II, London, 1960, new series, p. 134. Colour (*rang*) represents individualization or determination (*ta'ayyun*) or descent of the Absolute (Berangi). The following lines of Shelley, says Nicholson, explain the idea contained in Rumi's verses :

'Life, like a dome of many coloured glass,  
Stains the white radiance of eternity'.

The section containing Rumi's verses is entitled 'Explaining that both Moses and pharaoh are subject to the Divine Will, like antidote and poison and darkness and light, and how Pharaoh conversed in solitude with God, praying that He would not destroy his (good) reputation.'

Ibn 'Arabi and his interpreters, including Rumi, maintained that the conflict between Moses and Pharaoh was not a war between 'obedience' and 'disobedience.' In essence there was no antagonism between Pharaoh and God, but Pharaoh opposed Moses for implementing the command (*amr*) of God as revealed in the law. 'A Moses comes into conflict with Moses' means that the 'Unity displays itself' in forms which, though outwardly opposed, are in fact nothing but the Divine Essence viewed under the aspect of 'otherness' and, like water and ice, ultimately identical,' R.A. Nicholson, *Rumi, Poet and Mystic*, 3rd impression, London, 1964, p. 146. In a different note Nicholson writes about the above verse :

The essence of Man is Divine and therefore one; conflict between spirit and flesh, mind and body, arises from creation, which involves plurality and difference. 'Our war and our peace is in the light of the Essence : 'tis not from us, 'tis between the two fingers of God,' i.e. all this opposition has its source in the Divine attributes objectified in the world and in Man..., for 'the edifice of creation is based on contraries.' In order that God may be made known, the One appears as the Many, and His names and attributes are distinguished from His Essence, though in truth they are nothing but the Essence viewed under the form of 'otherness' and, like water and ice, are ultimately identical. This apparent difference-in-identity is described by the poet as war between a Moses and a Moses.



In a private conversation with friends, the Khwaja made the statement recorded by Kashifi: 'The most important intellectual discipline is the knowledge of Qur'anic exegesis, *Hadis* and *Fiqh*. The essence of the latter is *Tasawwuf* which discusses the *Wujud* (Being). Exponents of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* assert that Unity is manifested in all phenomenal existence and relationships. It is the theophany of the Divine. This subject is very complex and subtle and any attempt to understand it with the assistance of reason and imagination leads to impiety and heresy, for in the world impurities and animals such as dogs and pigs are also found in great abundance. To identify them with Being is both undesirable and indiscreet, and to exclude them as an exception to the rule is against the principle and technical usage of Being as propounded by sufis. It is therefore incumbent on the pious that they should devote themselves to purifying their hearts of worldly matters, so much so that the perception of Being naturally illuminates them.'<sup>1</sup>

Turning now to the disciples of the Khwaja, a number shared his love of travelling in order to enrich mystical experiences. One of them was Shaikh Faiyazi Bukhari, who spent some time in northern China where he practised mystic exercises and meditation in the mountains and deserts of that area. Some time before 1531 he reached Nagaur in Rajasthan (India) and died there.<sup>2</sup>

The conquest of India by Babur in 1526 gave considerable impetus to

R.A. Nicholson, *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, VII, commentary on the first and second books, London, 1937, p. 158.

Again Rumi wrote :

The letters are the vessel: therein the meaning is (contained) like water; (but) the sea of the meaning is (with God)—*with Him is the Ummu'l-Kitab*.

In this world the bitter sea and the sweet sea (are divided)—between them is a *barrier* which they do not seek to cross.

Know that both these flow from one origin. Pass on from them both, go (all the way) to their origin !

Without the touchstone you will never know in the assay adulterated gold and fine gold by (using your own) judgment. Nicholson, R.A., *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, Book I, London, 1960, lines 298-99, translation, II, p. 19.

Nicholson offers the following comments :

God, who has no like or opposite, is the ultimate source of good and evil, faith and infidelity, and all other opposites, since these are nothing more than reflexions of the Divine attributes of Beauty and Majesty, Mercy and Wrath, etc., i.e. aspects in which God reveals Himself to human minds. Such contradictions, though proper to the world of Appearance, are transcended and unified in the mystic's vision of Reality. . . The mystic, 'seeing by the Light of God,' knows that the infinite Divine perfections include all that we describe as good or evil. Rumi bids his readers 'break through to the Oneness,' abandon their evil selves and the world in which evil is at war with good, and seek union with the Absolute Good. Nicholson, R.A., *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, VII, p. 32.

<sup>1</sup>Rashahat, p. 272.

<sup>2</sup>Abu'l-Fazl, *A'in-i Akbari*, Lucknow, 1893, pp. 202-3, *RIM*, p. 79.



the development of the Naqshbandiyya order. Both the new Emperor and a large number of his Central Asian soldiers were the spiritual followers of the disciples of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. Some eminent Naqshbandiyya sufis also migrated from Central Asia to India. Among the most prominent were Khwaja 'Abdu'sh-shahid and Khwaja Kalan, a descendant of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar<sup>1</sup> whom Babur deeply respected. Khwaja Khawand Mahmud, son of Khwaja Kalan and a grandson of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar, and who was called Makhdumi Nura in the *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, was also held in great respect by Babur who died when the Khwaja was on his way from Kabul to meet him. Mirza Kamran, the governor of the Panjab invited him to stay at Lahore, but the Khwaja chose first to see Babur's successor Humayun. The influence of the Shattaris on Humayun annoyed the Khwaja, however, and he returned to Lahore in 943/1536-37. After living with Mirza Kamran for three years he then left India forever.<sup>2</sup>

In the early years of Akbar's reign the Naqshbandiyya influence returned to the Mughal court and many Naqshbandiyya sufis who migrated from their homeland in Transoxiana to Agra obtained high posts in the civil and military administration. In general they retained their loyalty to the Emperor and even supported the broadly-based policies which Akbar introduced after 1579.<sup>3</sup> Some Naqshbandiyya *pirs* who had migrated to India after spending a few years with Mirza Hakim (Akbar's half-brother), or who were originally from Kabul, remained loyal to Mirza Hakim and also opposed Akbar's religious policies. One of their leaders was Khwaja 'Ubaid Kabuli, a *khalifa* of Maulana Lutfu'llah Naqshbandi.<sup>4</sup> After some years as a sufi preacher at Kabul under the patronage of Mirza Hakim, he migrated to Akbar's court. Muhammad Hashim Kishmi says that Akbar banished him to Thatta after he became involved in some religious dispute.<sup>5</sup>

A very prominent Naqshbandiyya who left his mark on the Sunnis of Kashmir was Khwaja Khawand Mahmud Naqshbandi 'Alwi Husaini, the son of Khwaja Mir Saiyid Sharif. His ancestors were descendants of Khwaja Muhammad 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Attar,<sup>6</sup> a leading disciple of Khwaja

<sup>1</sup>*Babur-nama*, p. 631.

<sup>2</sup>Haidar Mirza, *Tarikh-i Rashidi*, English translation by E. Denison Ross, London, 1898, pp. 395-401; *MRM*, pp. 180-81.

<sup>3</sup>*MRM*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>4</sup>Maulana Lutfu'llah was the *khalifa* of Maulana Khwajagi, who in turn was the *khalifa* of Maulana Muhammad Qazi. The latter was a favourite disciple of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar (*Rashahat*, pp. 344-47), Mu'inu'd-Din, *Kanzu's-sa'adat*, Tashkent MS., f. 248a.

<sup>5</sup>Muhammad Hashim Kishmi, *Nasamatu'l-quds*, Tashkent MS., f. 233a; for the religious problems of Akbar's reign, see *RIH*.

<sup>6</sup>Khwaja 'Ala'u'd-Din 'Attar was regarded a deputy of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband and occupied a very prominent position among the latter's *khalifas* (*Rashahat*,



Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband. Khwaja Khawand Mahmud al-'Attari al-Naqshbandi al-'Alwi al-Husaini was born in 965/1557-58 and was educated at Samarqand.<sup>1</sup> At twenty he fell into a state of mystical ecstasy which prompted him to make a pilgrimage. When he arrived in Wakhsh,<sup>2</sup> the governor persuaded him to live there. After a quarrel with government officials he later moved to Balkh.

At the age of twenty-three, the Khwaja became the disciple of Khwaja Ishaq of Dehbed<sup>3</sup> (close to Balkh), a *khalifa* of Maulana Lutfu'llah. At his *pir*'s orders he went to Bukhara where he performed ascetic exercises at the tomb of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband in the Qasr-i 'Arifan. On his return he was given the responsibility of doing missionary work for the Naqshbandiyya order.

Travelling through Wakhsh and Kabul, Khwaja Khawand Mahmud joined a caravan bound for Lahore. Somewhere in Gujarat (the Panjab), however, where the routes to Kashmir and Lahore separated, he fell into an ecstatic trance and his horse, unguided, took the route to Kashmir. When the Khwaja regained consciousness he decided it was a Divine portent and so resigned himself to the will of God.

At Srinagar an eminent Mughal officer, Jamil Beg, greeted Khwaja Khawand Mahmud warmly. Opposed though he was to the Khwaja's mission to assume the role of a leading Naqshbandiyya dervish, he informed him that as the ordinary Muslims of Kashmir were profligate and the 'ulama' puffed up with intellectual pride, Srinagar was hardly a proper place to be transformed into a Naqshbandiyya centre. Many Naqshbandiyya before him had tried to disseminate their teachings but were unable to make any impact upon the Kashmiris. Firmly the Khwaja rejected this advice on the basis that he had been commissioned by his *pir* to act as the Naqshbandi guide in the region. Only a few days after declaring himself the Naqshbandiyya *pir* in Kashmir, he was approached by both the Kashmiri and the Mughal population for guidance. Even

p. 57). His name was Muhammad bin Muhammad. A native of Khwarazm, he obtained his religious education at Bukhara. The personal care of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband sharpened Khwaja 'Attar's mystical sensitivity, and both 'ulama' and sufis considered him as their spiritual leader. After the death of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din, Khwaja 'Attar settled in Chaghaniyan near Hisar-Shadman (Dushanbe in Tajikistan) and died on 29 Raja 802/17 March 1400 (*Rashahat*, pp. 56-57, 80-90). Maulana Ya'qub Charkhi also obtained training under Khwaja 'Attar, *Nafhatu'l-uns*, p. 398.

<sup>1</sup>Mu'inu'd-Din Naqshbandi, *Kanzu's sa'adat*, f. 258a.

<sup>2</sup>Near Hisar-shadman.

<sup>3</sup>Khwaha Ishaq was the son of Maulana Khwajagi, but at his father's desire received his mystical training under Maulana Lutfu'llah. Khwaja Ishaq's *pir* not only prescribed very hard ascetic exercises, but forced him to lead a poverty-stricken life in order to make him forget that he was the son of an eminent sufi *pir*. *Kanzu's-sa'adat*, f. 249b.



teachers and 'ulama' vied with one another in becoming the Khwaja's disciples. Jamil Beg regretted his original advice and built a mosque near his guest-house for the Khwaja. Nevertheless his hostility remained, but Khwaja's spiritual power foiled Jamil Beg's intrigues and he was forced to admit defeat.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly afterwards Khwaja Muhammad Amin (a nephew of Khwaja Ishaq Dehbedi) arrived in Srinagar. Some of Jamil Beg's followers who had been devoted to Khwaja Ishaq Dehbedi now became disciples of Khwaja Muhammad Amin. The ever-increasing band of disciples forced Khwaja Muhammad Amin into a state of rivalry with Khwaja Khawand Mahmud. However it was the latter's miraculous power, according to his son, Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, which prompted Khwaja Muhammad Amin to become his rival's disciple.<sup>2</sup> The Mughal government of Kashmir assigned the house of the Sultan of Kashmir, Husain Shah,<sup>3</sup> to the Shaikh who converted it into a *khanqah*, and a small mosque was built beside it. Before Akbar's death the Khwaja visited Agra where he initiated a number of high-ranking Mughal nobles, including Mirza 'Aziz Koka who became his disciple. Prominent ladies of the harem such as Sultan Salima Begum and Gulrukh Begum, also took the opportunity of becoming disciples of a direct descendant of their ancestral *pirs*, Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband and Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. Even Akbar, says Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, sought the Khwaja's blessings. After Jahangir's accession he departed for Kashmir, but had only reached Lahore when the rebel prince Khusrau asked him for his blessing for his uprising. Politely the Khwaja refused him saying that he prayed only for him who was fighting for a right cause and pious motives.<sup>4</sup>

In 1015/1606-07 Khwaja Khawand Mahmud reached Srinagar, and at the same time sent some of his disciples to Kabul to initiate others. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hasan and an illiterate Kashmiri disciple were sent by the Khwaja to propagate Islam in Tibet. In 1017/1608 the Khwaja revisited Agra, but this time he was involved in a conflict with a Mughal officer who was his enemy over the question of 'discipleship';<sup>5</sup> the Khwaja's clever handling of the situation staved off a crisis, however. Such an orthodox Transoxianian nobleman as Khan-i A'zam offered no assistance to Khwaja Khawand Mahmud, but the Irani Abu'l Hasan (later Asaf Khan), the second son of Jahangir's *Wakil-i kul* (Prime Minister)

<sup>1</sup>Kanzu's-sa'adat, ff. 248B-50b.

<sup>2</sup>Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, *Mir'at-i taiyibat*, Raza Library, Rampur MS., ff. 86b-87a.

<sup>3</sup>Probably Husain Shah Chak (1563-70); a different Husain Shah of the Chak dynasty ruled only for a few months in 1586.

<sup>4</sup>*Mir'at-i taiyibat*, ff. 67b-69a.

<sup>5</sup>MRM, pp. 183-84.



I'timadu'd-Dawla, steadfastly supported him.<sup>1</sup> The Khwaja finally left for Kashmir after distributing about 23,000 rupees of his own funds in Agra to the deserving. In 1620 Emperor Jahangir, during his visit to Kashmir, evinced considerable interest in the Khwaja's mission as the Naqshbandiyya leader.

When the Khwaja assumed leadership of the Sunnis in Kashmir, who were deeply involved in a struggle against the Shi'i minority, he believed he was the only real Naqshbandiyya *pir* in India and that the status of other Indian Naqshbandiyyas like Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid) was inferior.<sup>2</sup> His anti-Shi'i feelings and his involvement in puritanical Sunni revivalist activities, however, prompted Jahangir to banish him to Kabul. But in the reign of Shahjahan he again returned to Kashmir and began to mobilize the Sunnis against Zafar Khan, the governor of Kashmir. Even 'Allami Afzal Khan, the influential *Diwan* who was famous for his orthodox brand of piety, became alarmed and advised Shahjahan that the type of leadership the Khwaja had assumed in Kashmir was a potential threat to the interests of the government. Although he hesitated to take action against the Khwaja, who was nearing eighty, Shahjahan accepted the advice of Afzal Khan.<sup>3</sup> The Khwaja was exiled to Lahore. His death occurred on 11 Sha'ban 1052/4 Nov. 1642 in Lahore where he was buried.<sup>4</sup>

The tomb over the Khwaja's grave also sparked off an interesting controversy. Traditionally such constructions were not erected for the Naqshbandiyya sufis. A governor of Lahore, previously hostile to the Khwaja, sided with those who considered the erection of the tomb sacrilegious to the Naqshbandiyya practice. The subsequent assassination of the governor, believed to be a miracle performed by the spirit of the Khwaja, ended all attempts to demolish his tomb.<sup>5</sup>

During his lifetime, the Khwaja had had many disciples and sixteen *khalifas*. He also fathered six sons, the eldest of whom Khwaja Khawand Ahmad, was his successor. The most famous, however, was his 4th son, Khwaja Khawand Mu'inu'd-Din, an eminent scholar who wrote many books on *Fiqh*, as well as historical works relating to his ancestors.

Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din migrated to India after his father had settled in Kashmir. He was trained in the formal religious sciences by the famous Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi<sup>6</sup> and was initiated into the

<sup>1</sup> *Mir'at-i taiyibat*, ff. 92a-93a.

<sup>2</sup> Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's letter to Khwaja Abu'l-Qasim Amkangi, *Maktubat-i Imam-i Rabbani*, I, no. 180, Karachi, 1972.

<sup>3</sup> *Kanzu's-sa'adat*, ff. 256b-58a.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, f. 258a; *Mir'at-i taiyibat*, f. 119a.

<sup>5</sup> *Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 628.

<sup>6</sup> *supra*, pp. 82-98.



Naqshbandiyya order by his father. After Shahjahan exiled the latter, Mu'inu'd-Din was permitted to remain in Srinagar where he was in charge of his father's disciples, carefully avoiding contact with the political scene. During Aurangzib's reign he remained a significant figure. He died in Muharram 1085/April 1674. His three sons all died in infancy, therefore the administration of the *khanqah* was taken over by Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din's widow. According to Muhammad A'zam, her charity in feeding and caring for the *khanqah's* servants and callers left a great mark on the annals of sufi history in Kashmir.<sup>1</sup>

During his life Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din compiled a work in Arabic called the *Fatawa-i Naqshbandiyya* in collaboration with other members of the 'ulama' in Kashmir, Lahore and Delhi. The work was, in fact, the precursor of the *Fatawa al-'Alamgiriyya* compiled under Aurangzib's personal supervision by a board of 'ulama'. The *Mirat-i Taiyiba* by Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din is a detailed account of his father's achievements; and a section of his *Kanzu's-sa'adat* in Persian, also includes a biographical account of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud, while the rest of the work deals with the problems of *Fiqh*, concluding with a detailed analysis of the duties of orthodox Sunni rulers. This section largely follows the *Zakhiratu'l-muluk*<sup>2</sup> by Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani and the *Sulukul-muluk*<sup>3</sup> of Fazlu'llah Ruzbihan Isfahani.

The Naqshbandiyya sufi who gained the most remarkable popularity in India in a very short period was Khwaja Muhammad Baqi, or Baqi Bi'llah Berang, (the son of Qazi 'Abdu's-Salam Khalji Samarqandi Quraishi) who was born in Kabul in either 971/1563-64 or 972/1564-65. His father was both an 'alim and a sufi, and his mother was a descendant of the family of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. From childhood he was introspective and meditative. In 978/1570-71 Maulana Sadiq Halwa'i,<sup>4</sup> an eminent 'alim and poet from Samarqand, arrived in Kabul from Mecca and Medina and stayed there at the request of Akbar's younger brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, the Viceroy of Kabul. Muhammad Baqi became his disciple. Impressed with his student's intellectual potential, Maulana Sadiq allowed Muhammad Baqi to accompany him to Transoxiana. To the regret of some distinguished scholars there, Muhammad Baqi failed to complete the prescribed education of an 'alim, rejecting it for sufism.<sup>5</sup>

Muhammad Baqi performed *tauba* (repentance) under many

<sup>1</sup>*Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, pp. 168-69.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 292-95.

<sup>3</sup>MS. copies of this work are available in the British Museum, and in Tashkent and Leningrad, English translation by M. Aslam, Islamabad, 1976.

<sup>4</sup>Maulana was also a poet.

<sup>5</sup>Muhammad Hashim, *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, Kanpur, 1890, p. 6.



Naqshbandi saints of Transoxiana, firstly under Khwaja 'Ubaid, a *khalifa* of Maulana Lutfu'llah, then in the presence of Khwaja Iftikhar Shaikh of Samarqand. Initially Khwaja Iftikhar had only reluctantly become *pir* to the young Muhammad Baqi, but he relented after becoming convinced of his sincerity. Muhammad Baqi's next spiritual influence was Amir 'Abdu'llah Balkhi. For two years he performed the *zikr* and meditation prescribed by Amir 'Abdu'llah Balkhi but remained spiritually unstable.<sup>1</sup> After leaving Kabul for India in pursuit of a more inspired spiritual life he contacted some of his relations who held prominent government positions. Although they attempted to persuade him to enter the service of the Mughals the Khwaja remained aloof from the worldly career of an *'alim* or of a military man.

In Lahore, Muhammad Baqi had an unrequited love affair. The sources refer only to a worldly (*suri*) beloved but most probably, as was the custom in Transoxiana,<sup>2</sup> the loved one was a young boy. When the two were finally separated, the distraught Muhammad Baqi plunged into the ecstatic side of sufism, spending his nights reading mystical works describing love (both earthly and divine) and his days in aimless wandering through the streets of Lahore and the graveyards and nearby forests. For months neither rain nor the vicissitudes of the seasons deterred him from his search for a perfect sufi who could enable him to obtain spiritual peace and Divine love.

Finally Khwaja Muhammad Baqi heard of a *majzub* (ecstatic) famed for his spiritual perfection, only to be rejected by him and even stoned for his trouble. His mother, herself a devout and pious woman, who had accompanied him, was greatly disturbed by her son's mental and spiritual condition. She would pray for him nightly. After some time the *majzub* relented and blessed the Khwaja; and the study of a mystical book further infused his heart with mystical illumination.

Khwaja Muhammad Baqi then travelled to Delhi and from there as far as Sambhal in western U.P. in his continuing search for a perfect guide. From Sambhal he again returned to Lahore, then to Kashmir.

In Kashmir the Khwaja came in contact with Baba Wali,<sup>3</sup> who initiated disciples into the Naqshbandiyya order. In 1592 Baba Wali died, but by that time Khwaja Muhammad Baqi felt that the holy spirits of the

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat* pp. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, II, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup>Baba Wali originally belonged to Khwarazm and had received training under eminent scholars and sufis of the region. In 999/1590-91 he migrated to Kashmir and settled in the *khanqah* of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani. In the scramble for power between the scions of the sultans of Kashmir and Akbar, Baba Wali took sides with the Emperor but died on 15 Safar 1001/21 November 1592, after being administered poison by the enemies of Akbar. Khwaja Muhammad A'zam, *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, Lahore, 1303/1886, p. 110.



Naqshbandiyya Khwajas had prophesied his spiritual eminence. He travelled through Balkh and Badakhshan where he consulted the local sufis. At Amkina near Samarqand, he was warmly received by Maulana Khwajagi Amkinagi,<sup>1</sup> a spiritual descendant of Khwaja Nasir'u'd-Din Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. The stories of the Khwaja's swift initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order in three days are reminiscent of those connected with the initiation of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya by Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi.<sup>2</sup> Maulana Khwajagi advised Khwaja Muhammad Baqi to hasten back to India, and prophesied the success of the Naqshbandiyya *silsila* in the sub-continent through his teachings. The more senior disciples of the Maulana naturally were jealous of his privileged treatment but were silenced by the remark that before he had arrived in Amkina the Khwaja had already become a perfect sufi. What he (the Maulana) did was merely to stabilize the Khwaja's spiritual condition through his company, for he, unlike other sufi initiates, was not required to start from scratch.<sup>3</sup>

Leaving Samarqand, the Khwaja visited Lahore, where a severe famine had resulted in many people dying in the streets. In sympathy, according to hagiologists, Khwaja Muhammad Baqi refused all nourishment, sending his food ration to the starving. After a few weeks he set out for Delhi. On the road he gathered up those too weak to walk and put them on his own horse, but just outside each town he remounted in order to be inconspicuous in his charity. After his arrival in Delhi, the Khwaja lived in the Firuzabad fort near the Jamuna.

It is not known if Khwaja Muhammad Baqi's mother stayed in Lahore or accompanied him on the arduous journey to Kashmir and Transoxiana. However she did migrate with him to Delhi, where she worked for him during a period when his health was poor. As Khwaja Muhammad Baqi died on Saturday 25 Jumada II 1012/30 Nov. 1603 and is known to have lived there no more than four years, he must have arrived in Delhi in 1008/1599-1600. He then married two wives, and was surviv-

<sup>1</sup>Maulana Khwajagi Amkingi was the *khalifa* of his father Maulana Darwesh Muhammad (d. 19 Muharram 970/18 September 1562). Maulana Darwesh in turn was the *khalifa* of his maternal uncle Maulana Muhammad Zahid of Wakhsh (d. 1 Rabi' I 936/3 November 1529), a *khalifa* of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. Maulana Khwajagi is said to have strictly followed the practices of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband and rejected such practices as the morning *zikr-i jahr* invented by the followers of Khwaja Dehbedi. In 1008/1599-1600, Khwajagi Amkinagi died at an age of ninety. Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sirhindi, *Hazaratu'l-quds*, Urdu translation, Lahore, 1923, pp. 210-12.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, p. 190.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Hashim, *Nasamatu'l-quds*, Tashkent MS., ff. 259b-268a; *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 5-14; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, Tashkent MS., ff. 206b-12a; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, Urdu translation, pp. 213-21.



ed by two young sons who continued to promote the Ahrariyya teachings of the Naqshbandiyya order.<sup>1</sup>

We shall now discuss the most significant aspects of Khwaja Muhammad Baqi's teachings, referring to him by the title (Baqi Bi'llah) under which he was more widely known in later life.

In a *ruba'i* in which Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah paid tribute to the spiritual perfections of Shaikh Nasirud-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar, he invited sufis to follow the Ahrariyya-Naqshbandiyya path, claiming it achieved the nearest to mystic perfection for sufi, and was markedly superior to other paths. The *sine qua non* of this *Tariqa*, as mentioned earlier, was the attainment of *baqa'* (reintegration with the Essence) while strictly following the laws of the Shari'a and nurturing love for the Prophet. Theosophically the *Tariqa* was to be based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Ibn 'Arabi. *Fana'* (extinction), he reminded sufis, was the annihilation of human qualities or the death of the self. When God illuminated the heart of the devotee from a particle of the theophany of His Essence, his consciousness was transmuted and his being acquired the real state of *fana'*. In that state both the name and individuality of the devotee disappeared and whatever was attributed to the devotee was in fact reintegrated with the Essence. That stage was known as *Baqa' Bi'llah* (eternity in Allah). The transmutation into *fana'* prevented the reappearance of the human attributes in sufis although outwardly they retained their physical existence. A *pir* guided his disciples towards that stage of mystic development. The experience of *Tajalli* or the self-manifestation of the Absolute or vision of the Essence was a mystic stage dependant on the ascent of perfect sufis.<sup>2</sup>

In correspondence Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah wrote that the *Tajalli* (self-manifestation of the Absolute) of the onward journey along the mystical path was of three types; 1. The outward (*suri*) self-manifestation of the Absolute perceived by beginners; 2. the spiritual (*ma'nawi*) self-manifestation of the Absolute perceived by sufis with medium achievements; 3. the true self-manifestation of the Absolute perceived by perfect sufis. The perception of the self-manifestation of the Absolute did not imply the infusion of the Essence into the sufi (*hulul*) or the identification of the Essence with human nature; it was an unintelligible mystery experienced only by those who had reached the stage of perfection.<sup>3</sup>

*Tauba*, the initial aspect of the sufic journey, reiterated the Khwaja, was dissociation from sin, the heaviest veil shielding the mystic path. Sins against the Shari'a came into two categories, venial and heinous.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 29-31; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, I, Urdu translation, pp. 259-60, one of his wives was Qulich Khan's daughter.

<sup>2</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 51-52.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat-i Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*, MS., personal collection, f. 249b.



The *Tariqa* called on sufis to avoid both, but sin rejection was a preliminary stage only and the negative aspect of the *tauba*. The positive side of *tauba* was the removal of all veils and the development of a love for God and gnosis. Commoners repented of their sins but sufis begged forgiveness for their forgetfulness while observing obedience to God and performing such duties as prayers, fasting, payment of *zakat*, undertaking pilgrimages, crushing their 'headstrong souls' and while feeling delight at purifying their souls so as to make them inspired or tranquil.<sup>1</sup>

The second duty of sufis according to Naqshbandiyyas, said Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, was *zuhd* (renunciation). Its preliminary stage was the rejection of greed and the desire for money; the advanced stage would result in the abandonment of desire for this world and the hereafter. The attitude of a *zahid* (ascetic, also a kind of *faqir*, or dervish) to the world and its material benefits could be divided into three categories: 1. the greedy who were without wealth but were keen to acquire it; 2. the *zahid* who requested nothing but when offered wealth seized it; 3. the *qani'* (contented) who neither requested nor rejected gifts. The perfect form of renunciation sprang neither from hope of reward nor out of fear but, like Rabi'a's, was unconcerned with either.<sup>2</sup>

The third requirement of the sufi path was *tawakkul* (trust in God). The perfect form of *tawakkul* sprang from a perception of the Unity of Being; the sufi experienced nothing but One. According to sufis this involved the absorption of individuality into the Essence. Although this prompted confidence in God, man should not ignore his own efforts. A child trusted his mother but still cried for milk and a man raised his hand in order to eat. Thus work was essential to engender sufficient strength for prayer and worship but work should never be performed to achieve sensual pleasure. Different rules were prescribed for the accumulation of worldly resources and their preservation but the cornerstone of *tawakkul* was that all resources were designed to strengthen love for God.

The fourth duty of a sufi was *qana'at* (resignation). Sufis should retain only what was essential for their physical existence, being austere in food, dress and style of living. Beginners along the sufi path accepted only what they needed; those who had reached a middle stage ate only as much as would enable them to stand for *namaz*, and wore clothes merely for protection from heat and cold. The perfect sufis, that is the *muwahhids* (followers of the Unity of Being), dissociated themselves completely from the love of anyone other than God.<sup>3</sup>

The fifth requirement was *'uzlat* (self-seclusion). Mystics should be in

<sup>1</sup>*Malfuzat-i Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*, MS., personal collection, f. 29b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 4a-b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, ff. 5a-7a.



the company of their family or disciples only when it was indispensable for the welfare of others, for the self-seclusion of perfect sufis was calculated to banish all thoughts except those connected with God from their hearts; they should constantly re-examine the spiritual condition of the heart. Perfect sufis were permitted to mix with people who helped them to promote their spiritual life and guided them on the right path.<sup>1</sup>

The sixth requirement was *sabr* (patience), whether or not they achieved mystical illumination. *Tawhid* or the perception of the Unity of Being was essential to reach the stages of *tawakkul*, *zuhd*, *qana'at* and *sabr*. These sufic achievements were indispensable to a perfect perception of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*), the final goal of perfect mystics.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah in his correspondence discussed the philosophy of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani (659/1261-736/1336), a vehement exponent of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*<sup>3</sup> (Unity of Perception). The Khwaja believed that Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula's perception was based on a perfect consciousness of Unity but that the Shaikh was more dogmatic in his utterances on the transcendence of God than the theologians, affirming that creation was entirely external to God, who commanded attributes and actions. However Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah said that the writings of Ibn 'Arabi were just as soundly based on scholarship as on mystical experience and that the two co-existed, although uneasily.<sup>4</sup>

A week before his death Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah was said to have declared that *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) was a narrow lane while the highway for the faithful was different. Such a truth, he added, was confirmed to him through '*ayn al-yaqin*'.<sup>5</sup> Although he knew this earlier, at the end of his life, said the Khwaja, he had obtained a different consciousness. However these remarks do not specifically imply the conversion of the Khwaja to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi believed his *pir* did not die a follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>6</sup>

In his lifetime the Khwaja unrelentingly criticised sufis who he believed to be observing the external form of the *Tawhid*. They were wayward, he argued, and also misled others by identifying everything with Reality, even believing the universe to be an illusion and fantasy. This type of philosophy, the Khwaja asserted, was followed by sophists but it was not the highroad shown by the prophets. The truth was that which Ibn

<sup>1</sup>*Malfuzat-i Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*, f. 13a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 13b-16a.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, pp. 248-250.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat-i Khwaja*, f. 27b.

<sup>5</sup>*supra*, pp. 173-174. According to the Mujaddid the *Wahdat al-Wujud* belonged to the realm of 'the certainty' obtained through knowledge ('*ilm al-yaqin*') while the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* belonged to that of certainty obtained through the sight.

<sup>6</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 43. The authority for the remarks in this letter is Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi.



'Arabi had formulated but which had been misinterpreted. The great Shaikh had affirmed that the universe was contained in the Divine consciousness and that creation was the process of the externalization of that consciousness; all external existence could be compared to the reflections in a mirror which exist and at the same time do not exist, no existence being separate from the Being. In short, the universe is the instrument of the manifestation of the Divine omnipotence and will. Names and attributes are identical with His '*ayn* (Essence). The Khwaja used another analogy : the central point was the source of the formation of the circle and therefore the circle was shaped only by its relation to the central point. The same analogy applies to the conscious descent of the Essence or Absolute and the emergence of the Universe and the subsequent mystical ascent of the Perfect Man.<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on the meaning of the Qur'anic verse: 'From the evil of the darkness, when it is intense',<sup>2</sup> Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah asserted that the Act of Being was pure good and that evil was a relative concept. Thus he rejected the possibility of the existence of good and evil as two separate identities. To take one example, good may be compared to sun and evil to night. When the rays of the sun were no longer visible night emerged; the sun of course did not disappear, for this illusion was a temporary, relative phenomenon. So it was with evil, which was similar to the relative non-visibility of the sun's rays. This was why men rightly thought their sins and faults were their own creation and were not caused by 'Pure Good'.<sup>3</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's enthusiasm for the *Wahdat al-Wujud* within the framework of the Shari'a was matched only by the emphasis he placed on humility and self-effacement. The Prophet Muhammad and the Caliph Abu Bakr were taken as paragons of humility and courtesy, and Khwaja Baqi argued that self-conceit was the mightiest obstacle to living a truly mystical life. The Naqshbandiyya *pirs* concealed their spiritual achievements and were continually engaged in praying to God and giving thanks to Him, and in the recitation of the Qur'an and the performance of *namaz*. The Khwaja himself was notably courteous and polite in his behaviour, taking responsibility for any errors or sinful behaviour on the part of his disciples. In his *khanqah* petty bickering was an anathema, and the Khwaja did not consider that he himself was superior to any one. He encouraged people to be pious by quoting allegorical anecdotes.<sup>4</sup> Although he helped the deserving, he refused all financial assistance for his dervishes. They were not allowed to perform *zikr-i jahr* (loud

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, CXIII, 3. The chapter relates to daybreak and contains five verses,

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*, ff. 3b, 11b, 21b, 22a.



zikr) and of course *sama'* and dancing were taboo. Nevertheless he himself remained in an ecstatic condition.<sup>1</sup> His training in *zikr* was invariably accompanied by the concentration of his own spiritual attention (*tawajjuh*) upon the individual disciple, enabling him to make rapid progress.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah avoided publicity and initiated only very keen disciples. Nevertheless immediately after his arrival in Delhi a number of outstanding personalities became his disciples. It was mainly due to the fact that his stay in Firuzabad Fort coincided with the return of the imperial camp from the Deccan in August 1601.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Farid Bukhari,<sup>4</sup> naturally accorded a warm welcome to the sufi from the homeland of his ancestors. About the end of 1601 Shaikh Farid was commissioned to eradicate the collection by corrupt officials<sup>5</sup> of unauthorized revenue along the road from Delhi to Lahore. His official duties thus brought him into frequent contact with the Khwaja who wrote several letters to Shaikh Farid. Ghausi Shattari is not exaggerating when he mentions that Farid Bukhari paid all the expenses of the Khwaja's *khanqah*.<sup>6</sup> The Mujaddid also acknowledged the extensive patronage Shaikh Farid Bukhari extended to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and his successors.<sup>7</sup>

In the Mughal empire the distribution of land grants and of charity in cash was the duty of the Sadru's-Sudur, Miran Sadr-i Jahan Pihani,<sup>8</sup> who was unable to ignore a sufi of the Khwaja's eminence and often took his advice in these matters. A letter written by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, although it does not specifically identify the recipient, was possibly addressed to the Sadr-i Jahan. It recommended Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the future Mujaddid Alf-i Sani) in these persuasive words :

There is a man in Sirhind named Shaikh Ahmad. He is very learned and strong in piety. For some days he associated with this *Faqir* (Baqi Bi'llah) who found his achievements surprisingly impressive. It would seem that he was to be a lamp to brighten the whole universe and I am convinced of his mystical eminence. The brothers and the relations of this Shaikh are all holy men and some of them are known to this supplicant. They are talented and are spiritual gems. The children of the Shaikh are also the embodiment of divine mystery. . . In short, however, large families, excessive poverty and unemployment have made their material condition distressing. If some annual cash grant were assigned to the family it would be

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>*Akbar-nama*, III, p. 794.

<sup>4</sup>*MRM*, pp. 161-64, 216-28, 248-52, 307-9.

<sup>5</sup>*Akbar-nama*, III, p. 801.

<sup>6</sup>*Gulzar-i abrār*, Manchester MS., f. 305b.

<sup>7</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 54 to Shaikh Farid.

<sup>8</sup>*MRM*, pp. 230-33, 251-52, 93, 96.



most meritorious, and even if it were not exorbitant, it would be a much laudable step. It may be noted that the *faqirs* are the gateway to Allah.<sup>1</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah made another generous gesture to Shaikh Ahmad. When Miran Sadr-i Jahan requested that the Khwaja teach him *zikr* and the *muraqaba* (meditation) of the Naqshbandiyyas, the Khwaja acquiesced as to the former, but advised him to learn *muraqaba* from Shaikh Ahmad.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah wrote short treatises on his understanding of the Naqshbandiyya-Ahrariyya sufi path, the ideas expressed in them were also included in a series of letters and lectures. However his ecstatic and passionately emotional mysticism is more fully reflected in his poetry. His similes and metaphors were rooted in conventional *Wujudi* terminology but his sensitivity added a new dimension to the mystical vision. Some of his *rubai's* were collected, and his favourite disciple, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (Mujaddid), wrote a detailed commentary (*the Sharh-i Rubaiyyat*) on some of them.

#### *Disciples of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*

Of all the successors of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah the most prominent was Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. However the disciple who looked after his family, including his infant children, and built him a mausoleum, was Khwaja Husamu'd-Din Ahmad. He was born in 977/1569-70 at Qunduz, but five years later his father, Qazi Nizam of Badakhshan,<sup>3</sup> migrated to Agra. The influence of Khwaja Husamu'd-Din's father at the imperial court enabled him to find a favourable position in the hierarchy of the Mughal military and civil services. Later he married a sister of Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl, an Indian Shaikhzada and well-known historian and admirer of Akbar. At the end of the sixteenth century he served in the Mughal campaigns in the Deccan under Mirza 'Abdu'r-Rahim Khan-i Khanan (964/1556-1036/1627) and held a *mansab* of 1,000. However the Khwaja also pursued his interest in the mystical traditions of his ancestors. Separation from the mystic stimulus of Delhi soon exasperated him, and, like the war veterans of northern India, he disliked the protracted guerilla-type warfare of the Deccan. The Khan-i Khanan attempted to pressurize the Khwaja not to resign, as did Abu'l-Fazl who was appointed a commander of the Deccan wars in January 1599,<sup>4</sup> and similar resignations from other Mughal *mansabdars* in the Deccan were certainly detrimental

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat-i Baqi Bi'llah*, f. 28b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 8b.

<sup>3</sup>He obtained higher education in theology and training in sufism under such eminent sufis as Shaikh Husain of Khwarazm. In 992/1584 he died. *MRM*, p. 192.

<sup>4</sup>*RIM*, pp. 464-85.



to the Mughal interests. The Khwaja soon had to be relieved of his duties, however, as he began constantly to lapse into ecstatic states and would be found wandering around the streets and bazaars in a crazy fashion.<sup>1</sup> Hagiological anecdotes to the effect that Khwaja Husamu'd-Din sought Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's protection against Abu'l-Fazl's harassments and that the Khwaja prophesied Abu'l-Fazl's later murder,<sup>2</sup> are not borne out by historical fact. There is no question of pressure being brought to bear on Khwaja Husamu'd-Din after he had retired to Delhi.

After relinquishing his military post, he and his wife gave away all their wealth to local dervishes, choosing to live a life of poverty and asceticism. Wishing Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah to be his *pir*, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din went to Delhi; however, the reluctant Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah suggested he seek initiation elsewhere, although finally he accepted Husamu'd-Din as a disciple.<sup>3</sup> Khwaja Husamu'd-Din's total dedication to the sufi path impressed his *pir*, in whose service he exhausted himself. Permitted the special privilege of training disciples in compliance with his *pir's* orders, he instructed his first disciple in *zikr*, but this was the extent of his teaching career, for his *pir* at his own request relieved him of this responsibility.

During Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's last illness, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din continued to serve him with characteristic zeal, during a period when most of his senior disciples were absent from the *khanqah* and the Khwaja's children were still very young. After his *pir's* death, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din's chief concern continued to be the welfare of the *khanqah* and the education of the children. He believed that Khwaja Nasiru'd-Din 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar had been reborn in the form of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, and that even after the latter's death he himself would continue to receive unabated blessings from Khwaja Baqi's tomb. Each day in Khwaja Husamu'd-Din's life started with obligatory morning prayers in the Firuzabad mosque, then about an hour was spent in meditation, followed by supererogatory morning prayers. Later he would visit the tomb of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah about two miles out of the town. There he would remain until formal prayers at the end of the day, after which there was recitation of the Qur'an, before meditation and some more supererogatory prayers. Returning home he would care for the material wellbeing of his *pir's* family. Despite his secluded and austere life, visitors to the *khanqah* were never neglected either.

Delhi's nobility and upper classes were ignored by the Khwaja, but he wrote recommendatory letters on behalf of poor and needy Muslims.

<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Farid Bhakkari, *Zakhiratu'l-khawanin*, I, Karachi, 1961, pp. 242-43; Shahnavaz Khan, *Ma'asiru'l-umara'*, II, Calcutta, 1888-91, pp. 878-79.

<sup>2</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 79; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, I, Urdu, p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 15-16.



As a number of his letters were ill-received by various dignitaries, his followers attempted to dissuade Khwaja Husamu'd-Din from his enthusiastic epistles in support of his fellow-Muslims.<sup>1</sup>

Khwaja Husamu'd-Din believed in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* philosophy of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and his other Ahrari *pirs*, showing little interest in the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* concepts expounded by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi,<sup>2</sup> Khwaja Husamu'd-Din probably did not participate in *sama'*, but the sons of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and other sufis in his *khanqah* did, ignoring Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's disapproval of what he believed to be a sinful innovation in the sufi *Tariqa*.<sup>3</sup> The Firuzabadi or the Delhi branch of the Naqshbandiyya *silsila*, which featured both the *Wahdat al-Wujud* of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar and the Chishtiyya practice of *sama'*, remained distinct and independent from the Sirhindi branch<sup>4</sup> directed by Shaikh Ahmad. Among followers of the Firuzabadi branch, as we shall see, were the famous Shah Waliu'llah and his father.

After Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's death, controversy over the succession strained relations between his senior disciple and Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, but Khwaja Husamu'd-Din remained neutral and free of ambition.<sup>5</sup> Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi became deeply impressed with the valuable service done by the Khwaja at his *pir's khanqah* and tomb, and his unceasing attention to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's family; in his turn Khwaja Husamu'd-Din greatly appreciated Shaikh Ahmad's efforts to promote the cause of the *Shari'a* and to help other Muslims. The imprisonment of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi<sup>6</sup> upset the Khwaja and he was anxious about the prisoner's welfare.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned earlier, Jahangir towards the end of his life, developed a hostility towards both Khwaja Husamu'd-Din and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi having already died on 10 December 1624. Both were summoned to Kashmir by the ailing Emperor who, conveniently for them, died before their arrival. Both thereupon returned to Delhi. On 1 Safar 1043/7 August 1633, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din died at Agra and was buried there. Later his earthly remains were transferred to Delhi and buried in a grave close by his *pir's*.<sup>8</sup>

Shaikh Ilahtad (d. 1049/1640), the most senior disciple of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, and the ambitious Shaikh Tajud-Din, both claimed

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 80-81; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, I, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 266, to Khwaja 'Abdu'llah and 'Ubaidu'llah.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 267, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 273, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din, II, 26, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din, III, 72, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 32.

<sup>6</sup>*infra*, p. 216.

<sup>7</sup>*Maktubat*, III, no. 72, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din.

<sup>8</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 86; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, I, p. 275.



succession to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. Both failed and Shaikh Taju'd-Din subsequently left India. His activities in Mecca and Medina will be discussed in the sixth chapter. We shall now return to a fuller account of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi, son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad.

The Shaikh was descended from the second Caliph, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, entitled al-Faruq. Furrukh Shah al-Faruqi al-Kabuli, the ancestor of the Chishti Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Mas'ud Ajodhani, popularly known as Ganj-i Shakar (Baba Farid) was also an ancestor of Shaikh Ahmad. During his lifetime Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad (Sirhindi's father) travelled the entire breadth of northern India from Rohtas to Bengal in pursuit of the wisdom and spiritual blessings of famous 'alims and sufis. As a young man he visited Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus at Gangoh, who taught him *zikr*, only to advise him then to complete his formal theological education before embarking further on the sufi path. By the time Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad completed his education, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus had died. Later he was formally received into the Chishtiyya order by the latter's son, Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din, and enjoyed the company of Shaikh Jalal of Thanesar. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad obtained initiation into the Qadiriyya order also.

By the time of the birth of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi on 14 Shawwal 971/26 May 1564, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad had adopted a settled *khanqah* life at Sirhind, and had become a scholar of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, engrossed in writing sufi treatises.<sup>1</sup>

After learning the Qur'an, Shaikh Ahmad obtained his preliminary education from his father who also initiated him into the Chishtiyya and the Qadiriyya order. Exhibiting considerable promise for theological and literary studies, he sat at the feet of several eminent scholars. He went to Sialkot to study under Maulana Kamal Kashmiri<sup>2</sup> for example. One of Shaikh Ahmad's *Hadis* teachers was Shaikh Ya'qub Kashmiri,<sup>3</sup> a disciple of Shaikh Husain Khwarazmi and of many other distinguished scholars of Central Asia, Iran and Arabia, including Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani.<sup>4</sup> A friend of Humayun, Shaikh Ya'qub also became attached to Akbar's court during the early days of his reign. A frequent traveller between the imperial court and Kashmir as well as outside India, he must have been in Sialkot when Shaikh Ahmad arrived there.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 88-126; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, II, pp. 27-31.

<sup>2</sup>Maulana Kamal belonged to a distinguished family of scholars of Kashmir. His brother Mulla Jamal was also a scholar and teacher in Sialkot. Shaikh Kamil Kashmiri was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya order by Khwaja 'Abdu'sh-Shahid Naqshbandi. Maulana 'Abdu'l-Hakim Sialkoti, an eminent scholar, was his disciple. Shaikh Kamal died in 1017/1608-9 and was buried in Sialkot, *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, pp. 297-98; *RIH*, pp. 189-90.

<sup>4</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 127-28.



Before he was seventeen,<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ahmad had acquired considerable grounding in *Hadis* and *Fiqh*, and he seems to have visited Fathpur-Sikri some time before the imperial court left for the Panjab on 22 August 1585. It was unlikely that at such a tender age he had obtained such resounding fame as to be invited to Akbar's court to assist Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl and Faizi in the compilation of their literary works.<sup>2</sup> It would seem that Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi may have gone to Fathpur-Sikri in the company of Shaikh Ya'qub, who seems to have introduced Shaikh Ahmad to his friends, Faizi and Abu'l-Fazl. It is indeed possible that the appreciation of philosophers and their science by Shaikh Abu'l-Fazl and his friends at their assemblies may have shocked Shaikh Ahmad who could have construed their comments to be an insult both to the 'ulama' and to Islam. In his excessive religious zeal Shaikh Ahmad was unable to tolerate such a situation. He said that in the *Munqiz min al-zalal*<sup>3</sup> Imam Ghazali had written that useful sciences which the philosophers claimed as their invention were astronomy and medicine, but these were in fact plagiarized from the books and wisdom of the former prophets. The remaining sciences, such as mathematics, were of no use to religion. Abu'l-Fazl was annoyed at these remarks and charged that Ghazali was unreasonable (*na-ma'qul*), whereupon Shaikh Ahmad became angry and ignored him for some days. Finally Abu'l-Fazl apologized and invited Shaikh Ahmad to visit him.<sup>4</sup> Although the Shaikh's resentment against philosophers and their science was consistent with his temperament and upbringing, his hopes that Ghazali would be uncritically accepted by Abu'l-Fazl and the intellectuals who associated with him were somewhat naive. It is probable that soon after their meeting Shaikh Ahmad parted company with Abu'l-Fazl. The claim by a modern historian that 'He (Shaikh Ahmad) stayed there [at Fathpur-Sikri or Agra] for an unspecified period of time during which he assisted the famous wazir (*sic*) and writer Abu'l-Fazl in his literary work'<sup>5</sup> is unsupported by fact. Muhammad Hashim claims that it was Shaikh Ahmad who wrote an eloquent page of exegesis of the Qur'an in an Arabic with no dotted Arabic letters which Faizi was unable to compose;<sup>6</sup> the *Hazaratu'l-Quds*<sup>7</sup> and other hagiological works assert that Shaikh Ahmad wrote a considerable portion of the *Sawati al-Ilham* of Faizi. As the present author says in another work,<sup>8</sup> this claim is anachronistic and uncorroborated.

<sup>1</sup> *Hazaratu'l-quds*, II, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> *Al-Munqiz min al-zalal*, Beyrouth, 1959, pp. 18, 20-27.

<sup>4</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 131-32.

<sup>5</sup> Yohanan Friedmann, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, McGill, 1971, p. xiii.

<sup>6</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 132.

<sup>7</sup> *Hazaratu'l-quds*, II, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> *MRM*, p. 207.



However, Shaikh Ahmad, like other orthodox Sunnis and revivalists, was seriously angered by the budding intellectual movements in Akbar's court and the freedom with which such controversial issues as prophethood, miracles and other beliefs were openly discussed. Shaikh Ahmad dedicated himself to upholding the dignity of orthodoxy and orthodox viewpoints. He wrote *Isbat al-Nubuwwah* (Proofs of Prophecy) to vindicate the orthodox stand on prophecy and to indirectly condemn Abu'l-Fazl and his associates. Some time after 995/1587 he wrote the *Radd-i Rawafiz* (Refutation of the Shi'is) as a rejoinder to the letter written by the Shi'i 'ulama' of Iran. This letter was a refutation of another written by the Sunni 'ulama' of 'Abdu'llah bin Iskandar Uzbek<sup>1</sup> (991/1583-1006/1598). The Sunni 'ulama' had admitted that if Muslims did not openly violate the Shari'a as interpreted by Sunni scholars they should not be condemned as infidels. The Shi'is, however, by attacking the memory of the first three Caliphs and of some of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad, were no longer Muslims and it was lawful to kill them and seize their property. Since the property belonging to the shrine of the eighth Imam, 'Ali al-Riza (c. 151/768-203/818), in Mashhad was in territory which was classed as *Dar al-Harb* (Abode of war), it could not be spared.<sup>2</sup> The Shi'i 'ulama' pleaded that the importance of the first three Caliphs was a controversial matter and that their criticism was not contrary to the Shari'a.<sup>3</sup> The letters of both parties reached India and orthodox Shi'i and Sunni nobles greatly enjoyed studying them. Shaikh Ahmad, however, chose to refute the Shi'i letter on the traditional lines of Shi'i and Sunni disputes.

It would seem that Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi remained in Agra even after the imperial camp had moved on in August 1585. Although his father had initiated him into the Chishtiyya order, in Agra Shaikh Ahmad showed interest in the Naqshbandiyya order and performed his *tauba* (repentance) under the guidance of Khwaja 'Ubaid Kabuli, whom Akbar later banished to Thatta.<sup>4</sup> It was possibly at Agra that Shaikh Ahmad wrote his *Radd-i Rawafiz*. According to the hagiologists, Shaikh Ahmad returned to Sirhind with his father who visited Agra specifically to bring his son back home.<sup>5</sup> In Sirhind, Shah Sikandar, the grandson of Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>'Abdu'llah Khan Uzbek conquered Khurasan in 996/1587-88 but Shah 'Abbas Safawi (996/1588-1038/1629) seized the province in 1006/1597.

<sup>2</sup>The Shi'i scholar, Qazi Nuru'llah Shustari included the correspondence in his *Majalisu'l-mu'minin*, begun in Rajab 993/July 1585 at Lahore and completed on 23 Zu'lq'ada 1010/15 May 1602. *Majalisu'l-mu'minin*, Tehran 1299/1881-82, pp. 45-48, see 'Abdu'l-Husain Nawa'i, *Shah 'Abbas, Majmu'a-i asnad*, Tehran, 1974, pp. 188-93. Tabitayan, Z., *Asnad-o namaha-i tarikhi*, Tehran, 1965, pp. 228-50.

<sup>3</sup>Shah 'Abbas, pp. 194-258.

<sup>4</sup>*Nasamatu'l-quds*, f. 233a. Curiously enough Khwaja Muhammad Hashim in his later work, the *Zubdat al-maqamat*, did not mention this fact at all.

<sup>5</sup>*Zubdat al-maqamat*, pp. 135-36. Khweshgi says that after the completion of his



Kamal Kaithali, bestowed the Shaikh's Qadiriyya *khirqā* on Shaikh Ahmad.

Even when actively involved with the Chishtiyya order, Shaikh Ahmad dissociated himself from *sama'*, leading a puritanically orthodox life. He taught a number of his father's disciples and enrolled new ones, but a feeling of frustration and restlessness pursued him and he passionately wished to make a *hajj* to Mecca. However it was impossible for him to leave his old father, so he stayed in Sirhind until the latter's death on 17 Rajab 1007/13 February 1599.<sup>1</sup> Early in 1008 he set off for Mecca. En route, in Delhi, his friend Maulana Hasan Kashmiri, suggested he should see Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah who from the time of his arrival in Delhi had obtained a great deal of publicity for his unique method of training disciples. At the end of Rabi' II 1008/Nov. 1599, Shaikh Ahmad visited Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah<sup>2</sup> and both were duly impressed with each other. Contrary to his general reluctance to accept disciples, the Khwaja invited Shaikh Ahmad to postpone his journey for a short period and spend the time in his *khanqah*. Finally the Shaikh found himself unable to resist the temptation of obtaining initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order. The Khwaja's mystical power, coupled with the Shaikh's enthusiasm and devotion to sufism made his spiritual progress rapid. In a single day, repetition of *zīkr* of the *Ism-i zat* (Name of Divine Essence) could transport Shaikh Ahmad into ecstasy. After initially bursting into tears he would lapse into a trance-like state known by the Naqshbandiyya as *ghaiba* (absence from the phenomenal world). In such a condition he would see a vast ocean in which the various shapes of the phenomenal world appeared in a shadowy form. This often lasted for many hours, sometimes for a whole night. When the Shaikh informed his *pir* of his ecstatic condition he was told that he had effaced his individuality in the Essence (achieved *fana'*) and was advised to preserve that state by discontinuing *zīkr*.

After two days Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi obtained *fana'* in the real sense and the Khwaja suggested that he continue meditation. The Shaikh then obtained *fana' al-fana'* or the complete extinction of his individuality in the Essence. The Khwaja was uncertain whether his disciple perceived the entire universe as One and everything united with the One, but finally agreed that Shaikh Ahmad was permanently at the stage of *fana' al-fana'* in which the mystic consciousness of a sufi witnessed phenomenal objects as One while in an unconscious state.

education Shaikh Ahmad was enlisted into the army (*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 587a). Although none of Shaikh Ahmad's biographers mention this, it is not unlikely that, after reaching Agra, Shaikh Ahmad served as a soldier under some local *mansabdar*, but, finding the service conditions disgusting to his puritanical temperament, resigned.

<sup>1</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 137.

<sup>2</sup> Mujaddid, *Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, Kanpur, 1309/1891-92, p. 6.



Shaikh Ahmad then commented on the next stage in his progression. He reported that he perceived both his own knowledge and God in the presence of each other and that his own qualities were also ascribed to God. This stage was known to the Naqshbandiyya as 'finality' in the stage of the 'commencement' of the sufi journey. The perfection achieved by sufis of other *silsilas* after lengthy *zikr* and repetition of the 'remembrance formulae' could be attained by talented Naqshbandiyyas just as swiftly as it had been by Shaikh Ahmad who reached this stage of 'finality' in just over two months. Afterwards the Shaikh found his heart expanded to such a degree that the entire universe was in comparison smaller than a sesame seed. Perceiving each particle existent in the universe as the self-manifestation of the Reality, Shaikh Ahmad found each particle the '*ayn* (essence) of his own self. Moreover he began to find each particle so vast that not only the entire universe, but more, was lost in it. To him each particle seemed a vast theophany in which all the forms and shapes of the universe were effaced; not only he himself but every particle constituted the universe. Learning of this stage, the Khwaja told Shaikh Ahmad that he had gained the *haqq al-yaqin* in the *Tawhid*, a stage known as *jama' al-jama'*.<sup>1</sup> In a further development from this stage, Shaikh Ahmad began to perceive that the forms and shapes of the universe which had appeared to him as Reality were in fact only a fantasy. In his confusion he was reminded of a quotation from the *Fusus al-Hikam* often repeated by his father:

If you wish you may call the universe Reality from one point of view and creation (*khalq*) from another point of view. If you do not distinguish between Reality and creation, you may call this state a metaphysical perplexity (*hayra*).

Shaikh Ahmad was somewhat comforted but his *pir* said that the Shaikh's *huzur* (the sense of the presence of God) was still not refined to the extent that he was able to distinguish the Being from fantasy. To this Shaikh Ahmad rejoined with the above saying from the *Fusus*. The Khwaja believed this statement did not refer to the mystical condition of perfect sufis. Shaikh Ahmad decided to return to his mystical exercises, and, after two days, Divine grace and the blessings of his teacher enabled him to distinguish between the Absolute and fantasy. He began to see that attributes, actions and perceived objects were unreal and separate from Being. In the external world nothing but Absolute Being existed. This development, the Khwaja believed to be the stage of *farq ba'd al-jama'*<sup>2</sup> and he reiterated that the guidance of a *pir* and the sufi's own

<sup>1</sup>"Assemblage of assemblage" or unification. A stage of the self-annihilation (*fana'*) of the sufis in which the man who sees and the object seen are nothing other than Absolute.

<sup>2</sup>The stage of dispersion after unification; in the stage of unification the attention is directed only to the Absolute without taking into consideration the creation. In the



efforts led to that stage of perfection only, and that further spiritual progress depended upon Divine grace.<sup>1</sup>

By the middle of Rajab 1008<sup>2</sup>/end of January 1600, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi had completed training in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in a period of three months which normally other sufis took years to accomplish. The Khwaja was tremendously gratified by the progress of his talented disciple, and permitted him to train disciples independently. He gave his approval for the Shaikh to return to his home town, asking some of his own disciples to accompany him.

Shaikh Ahmad was overwhelmed both by his own mystical achievement and by the impact of the spiritual influence of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. For some time after his arrival in Sirhind he remained in a state of great agitation, believing that he should totally withdraw from the world. His rivals and enemies complained to his *pir* of a new indifference to those around him, but the Khwaja's understanding of his beloved disciple was unswerving and he encouraged him to remain firm in his path and continue to train others. Gradually Shaikh Ahmad's condition stabilized, and he began writing regularly to his *pir* about his spiritual progress, receiving encouraging guidance in return.<sup>3</sup>

After about a year he visited Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah in Delhi. The Shaikh's friends were deeply impressed by the humility and respect extended to the Khwaja by his outstanding pupil. Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah also had three other leading disciples, but he believed that the seed of mystical achievements brought from Bukhara and Samarqand and sown in Indian soil would blossom because of the work of Shaikh Ahmad.

The first volume of the *Maktubat* of Shaikh Ahmad contains twenty letters to Khwaja Baqi. Although not chronologically arranged, they clearly illustrate Shaikh Ahmad's departure from the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in favour of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. In a letter to Shaikh Sufi, Shaikh Ahmad explained how he had come to believe in the superiority of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* over the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He affirmed that from his childhood, like his father before him, he had been a follower of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*). When Shaikh Muhammad al-Baqi (Baqi Bi'llah) became his *pir*, in a few short days the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was manifested to him; ultimately he grasped all the subtle, gnostic teachings of Shaikh Muhiu'd-Din (Ibn 'Arabi). Self-manifestation of the Absolute, considered by the author of the *Fusus al-Hikam* the highest point to be reached in sufism, reserved for the

stage of *farq ba'd al-jama'* the sufi perceives the diversification of essentially One into the many through His own names and determinations. *Kashani*, p. 99.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 142-44; *Maktubat*, I, 290 to Mulla Muhammad Hashim.

<sup>2</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 147-48.



*Khatam al-Walaya*,<sup>1</sup> was also revealed to him. So profoundly overwhelmed with ecstasy and mystical intoxication (*sukr*) was he that in a letter to the Khwaja he wrote the following *ruba'i*:

Alas ! this Shari'a is the creed of the ignorant,

Our creed is infidelity and our faith is Christianity (unbelief).

Infidelity and faith are the curling locks and the face of that pretty fairy (Reality),

On our path both infidelity and belief are unification.

He continued with these beliefs for some months. Suddenly, however, according to him, Divine grace drew aside the veils shrouding the Incomparable and Unknowable One. His former knowledge, founded on the identification of divinity with the Universe and the Unity of Being, disappeared. The alleged importance of encompassing (*ihata*), spreading over (*sarayan*), nearness (*qurb*) and conjunction (*ma'iyat*) with the Essence, manifested at the stage of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, abated. A certainty developed in him that the Exalted Real Creator had no connection with such a process, and that God was quite distinct from the universe. The Holy Being was not intrinsically comparable and knowable, while the universe was smeared with quality and matter. The knowable could not be called the '*ayn* (essence) of the intrinsically Unknowable, and the contingent being could not be called the '*ayn* of the Necessary Being.<sup>2</sup>

Friedmann argues :

This view of Sirhindi's spiritual development has been rather uncritically accepted by most modern writers.<sup>3</sup> We have seen, however, that no literary evidence exists to corroborate Sirhindi's claim that he had passed through a period in which he did not see any difference between Islam and infidelity. The first volume of the *Maktubat* contains 20 letters addressed to al-Baqi Bi'llah, but the ecstatic verses which Sirhindi claims to have written to him do not appear in them. . . . Thus, Sirhindi's description of his spiritual development from intoxication to sobriety is not supported by literary evidence. His earliest letters do not contain the verses denying difference between Islam and Infidelity, and, as we shall soon see, some

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, p. 49, the seal of the saints similar to the seal of the prophets. Although Ibn 'Arabi did not specifically mention it, it is believed that he considered himself the seal of the saints. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid-Din Ibn al-Arabi*, pp. 100-1; Izutsu, pp. 260-61.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, no. I, 31.

<sup>3</sup>He quotes, Qureshi, I.H., *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent*, The Hague, 1962, p. 51; Ikram, S.M., *Muslim Civilization in India*, New York and London, 1964, p. 167; *MRM*, p. 259. The present author has been misquoted by Friedmann, for he mentioned Shaikh Sirhindi's *ruba'is* in connection with his metamorphosis from the *Wujud* to *Shuhud* and did not call his views heretical.



of his most 'intoxicated' ideas are expressed in letters written very late in life.<sup>1</sup>

Such a hypothesis, however, is untenable, for Shaikh Ahmad's mystical metamorphosis from a belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to that of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was in fact the turning point in his mystical thought, just as it had been with Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. The fact that no letters containing mystically passionate verses by Shaikh Ahmad are to be found in the *Maktubat* does not necessarily mean one should reject the Shaikh's claim to have written them and doubt his 'self-image'. In one letter, Shaikh Ahmad asserted that his treatises on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were with his friends and collecting them was a waste of time.<sup>2</sup> Followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* loved to write symbolic mystical poetry, and Shaikh Ahmad no doubt did likewise. Even Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah wrote *ruba'is* based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to which Shaikh Ahmad added commentaries in order to make the contents acceptable to the orthodox.

The *Sharh-i Ruba'iyat* by Shaikh Ahmad was not available to Friedmann<sup>3</sup> and, like I.H. Qureshi, he considers *Wujudi* poetry to be imbued with 'heretical trends.' What these critics fail to appreciate is the fact that the *Wujudiyya* mystical poetry is based mainly on ecstatic forms of symbolism so dearly loved by the followers of *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Neither Shabistari nor Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah were imbued with 'heretical trends'; therefore there is no justification for Qureshi's claim that Shaikh Ahmad's spiritual guide 'corrected his exuberance by keeping him within the necessary discipline' and that 'the stage soon passed and there came greater balance in his (Sirhindi's) ecstatic emotions'. In a letter from Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi to Mir Muhammad Nu'man, one of his important *khalifas*, he argued that his commentary on the *ruba'is* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah was designed to reconcile the views of sufis who believed in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* with those of the 'ulama', and he had stated that the dispute between the parties was merely semantic.<sup>4</sup>

Before the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, Shaikh Ahmad paid a third visit to Delhi and was very warmly received by his *pir*. As the Khwaja had been unwell for many years and did not expect to survive he asked Shaikh Ahmad to give his two little children and their mothers the benefit of his mystical power. The Khwaja repeatedly extolled the spiritual achievements of Shaikh Ahmad to his disciples and other visitors. To all intents and purposes, according to Shaikh Ahmad's biographer, the Khwaja nominated him his successor.

The Shaikh returned to Sirhind and lived for some months in Lahore.

<sup>1</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 291, to Maulana 'Abdu'l-Ha'i explaining the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

<sup>3</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 246.



It is suggested that a considerable number of sufis became his disciples.<sup>1</sup> After his second or third visit to the Khwaja, he wrote to him describing how he had crossed the mystical stage occupied by the Imams of the house of the Prophet (Shi'i Imams), descendants of the Prophet's two grandsons, the sons of his daughter Fatima. He crossed the mystical stages occupied by the *Khulfa-i Rashidun* in company with Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband. The highest spiritual stage was occupied by Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq.<sup>2</sup> In contrast to that stage was the somewhat higher one, the exceedingly bright and brilliant stage of *Mahbubiyya* (the stage of being loved). Shaikh Ahmad perceived that he had reached this lofty height. The only stage he was unable to achieve was that of the Seal of the Prophets. (*Maktubat*, I, no. 11)

This letter was intended to underline the superiority enjoyed by the stage of *Mahbubiyya* and the stage of the Seal of the Prophets over that of the Seal of the saints, as had been suggested by Ibn 'Arabi and his predecessors. Although it is not known whether Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah objected to Shaikh Ahmad's mystical perceptions, the followers of Ibn 'Arabi, who formed the overwhelming majority of sufis, were certainly upset by it.

After the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi visited Delhi to pray at the grave of his *pir*. More pressing, however, was the matter of his claim to succession over the other three senior disciples of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. The available biographical literature written by the disciples of Shaikh Ahmad is chiefly designed to demonstrate their *pir's* supernatural achievements and therefore his natural superiority over others. After an objective reading of the *Zubdat al-maqamat*, there is little doubt that Shaikh Ahmad did not however have an easy victory in his claim to succeed his *pir*. It was in the end the decision of Shaikh Ilaḥdad and Shaikh Tajū'd-Din to emigrate to Mecca and Khwaja Husamū'd-Din's lack of ambition which finally opened the way for Shaikh Ahmad to assert his supremacy. Firuzabad, near Delhi, remained under the control of Khwaja Husamū'd-Din, and was directed by the two sons of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi then proceeded to claim spiritual supremacy over the whole of India, and also in his capacity as the renewer of the second Islamic millennium (*Mujaddid Alf-i Sani*), to be the greatest spiritual leader of the entire Islamic world.

News of the untimely death of Akbar on 12 Jumada II 1014/25 October 1605 filled Shaikh Ahmad with hopes that the pristine purity of Islam would now be implanted in India. He envisaged this would be achieved through those members of the nobility who during the lifetime of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah had become devotees and supporters of the

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 266; *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 155-56.

<sup>2</sup>The stage of the faithful witness of truth, occupied by the first Caliph Abu Bakr Siddiq.



Naqshbandiyya order. The political implications of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's activities have already been covered in the present author's *Muslim Revivalist Movements in Northern India* and will also be dealt with further in the seventh chapter of this book. In the following pages we shall discuss Shaikh Ahmad's contribution to the sufi movement in India.

It should, of course, be mentioned at this point that in his own works the Shaikh himself called the attention of his readers to the conflicts and contradictions contained in the statements relating to his mystic experiences, perceptions and gnosis, ascribing them to differences in time, mood and conditions. He denied that there was any real conflict and contradiction, or that there was in fact any real clash, and declared that changes in the ordinances of the Shari'a also appeared contradictory, but that these too were due to fluctuating circumstances.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ahmad's explanation failed to convince his contemporaries however, and even an orthodox sufi and scholar such as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq accused him of contradictions.<sup>2</sup> But in fact this criticism applied only to details and the analogies he used to explain revelations and perceptions of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* and his basic line of thought remained stable.

In his two early works, the *Isbat al-Nubuwwa* and the *Radd-i Rawafiz*, Shaikh Ahmad categorizes himself as an 'alim. In the *Radd-i Rawafiz* he calls himself a *khadim-i 'ulama'-i Ahl-i Sunnat wa Jama'at* (the servant of the Sunni 'ulama') whose *rag-i Faruqi* (lit. 'the Faruqi vein', implying the militantly orthodox spirit of the second Caliph 'Umar Faruq) was agitated at the sight of Shi'i penetration into a predominantly Sunni India and at the misguided Shi'i interpretation of the importance of the first three Caliphs and the Prophet's wife, 'A'isha.<sup>3</sup>

Following his initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order, Shaikh Ahmad had been forced to restrict his scholastic pursuits; nevertheless he claimed to be a *mujtahid* of *kalam* (the highest authority in the knowledge of scholastic theology) not through his own study but, as he wrote, through inspiration from the Prophet. He added that on all problems of *kalam*, he held a special opinion. Initially he thought that wherever there was a conflict between the views of the *Maturidis*<sup>4</sup> and the *Ash'aris*<sup>5</sup> the latter were correct. Later a 'flooding of the light of knowledge' convinced him that the *Maturidis* were correct, and he began to support the arguments of their 'ulama', believing that their obedience to the Shari'a

<sup>1</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 55.

<sup>2</sup>Letter of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to the Mujaddid.

<sup>3</sup>*Radd-i Rawafiz*, Tashkent MS., ff. 93b-94a.

<sup>4</sup>The orthodox Sunnite school founded by Abu Mansur Muhammad al-Maturidi (d. 333/944), popular in Transoxiana.

<sup>5</sup>The Sunni doctrines defended on the pattern of the rational arguments of the Mu'tazila by Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali al-Ash'ari (260/873-4-324/935-6).



placed them in a superior position to the *Ash'aris*. The views of both the *Ash'aris* and the *Maturidis*, he asserted, accorded with the religious truth, but the involvement of the *Ash'aris* in metaphysical dialectics deprived them of the prominence among orthodox Sunnis enjoyed by the *Maturidis*. However in all matters of theological conflict between sufis and 'alims, Shaikh Ahmad believed the 'ulama' to be correct.<sup>1</sup>

The Shaikh nevertheless claimed that the esoteric knowledge of sufis was of a superior nature to the exoteric knowledge of the 'ulama', therefore *pirs* who imparted this form of knowledge should receive greater respect than teachers of exoteric knowledge. He made some interesting distinctions between different classes of teachers. For example, teachers of mysticism were on a higher level than that of the knowledge taught by the 'ulama', likewise the latter were on a higher level than those who taught weaving or haircutting. Among imparters of exoteric knowledge, an instructor in *Kalam* and *Fiqh* should command more respect than a teacher of grammar, and the latter was superior to the philosophy teacher who was involved in useless, stupid discussions based on a distorted version of the teachings of orthodox Islam.<sup>2</sup>

Consistently Shaikh Ahmad declared that faith was dependent on an obedience to the teachings of the prophets. No saint could attain a higher spiritual stage without first obtaining a perfect grounding in the teachings of his prophet. Were a saint to attain some minor spiritual perfection which his prophet had not attained, the credit for it was automatically shared by the prophets. In fact, he wrote in his correspondence that the perfections of *Wilaya* (sainthood) were like a minute drop of water in comparison to the ocean of perfections of the *Nubuwwa* (prophethood). Some misguided sufis considered the sainthood superior to the prophethood, others commenting on this theory said that sainthood of the prophets was superior to the prophethood. Some theorists assumed that as sainthood was concerned with Reality it was therefore superior to the prophethood, whose chief concern was with disseminating the divine message to humanity. All these misconceptions, according to Shaikh Ahmad, were the product of ignorance of the real importance of prophethood and of the fact that saints derived their power from prophets. In comparison to prophethood, the position of sainthood was nothing more than that of a servant to a master. Were the reasoning of misguided saints accepted, the angels would have to be given superiority over prophets,<sup>3</sup> a situation totally unacceptable to Sunnis. In his correspondence, the Shaikh persuasively argued the superiority of the prophets over the angels, at the same time emphasizing that the perfections of sainthood could in no way be compared with those of prophethood.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 53.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, I, nos. 260, 291.



In the *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* Shaikh Ahmad wrote that the commentators on the *Fusus al-Hikam* laboured unnecessarily to gloss over Ibn 'Arabi's pronouncement that 'the seal of the prophets (*Khatm al-Anbiya*)' acquired spiritual knowledge from the seal of the saints (*Khatm al-Auliya*)'. They wrote that as the 'seal of the saints' was the custodian of the treasury of the 'seal of the prophets' there was no harm in the prophets taking something from their treasurer (seal of the saints).<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad divided the sufi hierarchy into three categories: *wilaya*, *shahada* and *siddiqiya*. To him the stage of *wilaya* (sainthood) was a rudimentary stage in the development of a mystic. In it sufis were dominated by gnosis based on *sukr* (mystic intoxication) and their *sahw* (mystic sobriety) was subjugated to *sukr*. The second stage transported the sufi into the stage of *shahada* (consciousness of the sufic goal). In it the *sahw* tended to dominate over *sukr* but the victory was not decisive. The third and highest stage of the sufi was the *Siddiqiya*, above which there was only the stage of the *Nubuwwa*, for no further stage of mystic remained. Both the *Siddiqiya* and the *Nubuwwa* were in no way influenced by *sukr* and therefore their gnosis and spiritual utterances were compatible with the Shari'a.

According to Shaikh Ahmad, the difference between a *Siddiq* (faithful witness of the truth) and a prophet was in their respective methods of acquiring spiritual knowledge—the former acquiring knowledge through Divine inspiration (*ilham*) and the latter through Divine revelation transmitted by an angel. The other major distinction was that the *Siddiq's* knowledge was due to his obedience to the prophet, implying a relationship between the root and the branch. Other differences were that the knowledge of the prophets was conclusive, a final directive to others, while that of the *Siddiq* was based on his own inspiration and was not conclusive for others.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad also believed that he himself had gone beyond the stage of the *wilaya*, and in establishing himself at the stage of the *Shahada* was on the threshold of *Siddiqiya*. To him his achievement was in part due to the pre-eminence of the Naqshbandiyya order, which was superior to other orders for a variety of reasons. Most importantly it had the unique privilege of being based on traditions of Abu Bakr Siddiq, which made a direct impact on the emotions of *sufis*. Unlike other sufi orders, the Naqshbandiyyas,<sup>3</sup> according to the Shaikh, did not attach any importance to the mechanics of sufic organization such as the award of the cap or *shajara* (tree of spiritual affiliation), but influenced the spiritual development of their disciples through the impact of their personality

<sup>1</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup>*Ma'arif-Ladunya*, Tashkent MS., f. 65b.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 290.



(*suhbat*).<sup>1</sup> In a letter to his eldest son, the Shaikh wrote that by meditation and self-mortification infidels could cleanse their baser selves (*nafs*) but not their hearts. They were able to exhibit some supernatural power but this was merely deceptive and represented a benefit granted to the sinner by God.<sup>2</sup> Members of the sufic orders who strove to cleanse the heart through persistent self-mortification and meditation could devote as many as thirty years to the eradication of the influence of their baser selves and purification of heart but all in vain. Conversely, the Naqshbandiyya *sayr* (contemplative journey) beginning in the heart led them straight to the realm of *amr* (the Divine Command).<sup>3</sup>

Shai kh Ahmad traced the significance of the heart in mystic discipline back to a saying of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband's which he claimed no earlier Naqshbandiyya had explained, God having revealed its significance to him alone. The Khwaja had stated that other sufis had two-sided mirrors while his mirror had six facets. The Shaikh explained that the mirror represented the heart of a gnostic which was the connecting link between the baser self and the spirit. When Sufis reached the stage relating to the heart, the secrets of this world and the knowledge relevant to the hereafter were revealed. To eminent Naqshbandiyyas were revealed the total secrets of a totality of mankind as well as the six mysteries of the heart. These latter related to *nafs* (baser self), *qalb* (heart), *ruh* (spirit), *sirr* (inner), *khafi* (hidden) and *akhfa* (the most hidden). While other sufis gained only the mysteries of *nafs* and the heart, the Naqshbandiyyas acquired all six.<sup>4</sup> The Shaikh did not however explain why the last five mysteries could not be acquired by other sufis.

Naqshbandiyya neophytes, according to Shaikh Ahmad, were not required to perform the traditional ascetic exercises for self-mortification, but instead were urged to sharpen their cravings for God by concentrating their energies on obedience to the Shari'a and on fostering a passionate love for the devotional exercises of the Prophet.

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi explained his own love for the Prophet by contrasting it with that of Rabi'a of Basra.<sup>5</sup> She once replied to the Prophet Muhammad in a vision that her great love for God had left no place in her heart for the love of His Prophet. Shaikh Ahmad, on the other hand, chose to declare that his ardent love for the Prophet enabled him more fully to love God, Muhammad's creator.<sup>6</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi also believed the Naqshbandiyya *silsila* had the additional superiority of having inherited the sufic traditions of both 'Ali and Abu Bakr *via* Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, the sixth Shi'i Imam. Shaikh Ahmad maintained that Ja'far al-Sadiq was descended on his

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, II, 18.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, 260.

<sup>3</sup>*HSI*, pp. 28-30.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, 266.

<sup>4</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 37.



father's side from 'Ali and on his mother's side from Abu Bakr, his mother being the daughter of Abu Bakr's grandson, Qasim bin Muhammad. Consequently, under the aegis of the Naqshbandiyyas, the sufi methods of 'Ali, based on the abundance of knowledge, were combined with the sufi methods of Abu Bakr which were founded on love of the Prophet.

Continuing this theme, Shaikh Ahmad declared Naqshbandiyyas to be the leading order of mystics also because their interpretation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was based on *tanzih* (transcendence). He admitted that Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar had discussed the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in the sense of the Unity in multiplicity, but contended that his world view remained predominantly rooted in *tanzih*. The Khwaja's perception of 'self-manifestation' had no relevance to the physical world ('*alam*). The mystical forms and images seen in his contemplative vision were the objects of his knowledge of Reality. The Khwaja's case could be compared with someone who was so deeply engrossed in the perception of the sun that in his great passion he lost his own identity. Such a person could, through Divine grace, regain his personality even though all traces of his identity had disappeared.<sup>1</sup>

The predominance of *tanzih* in the Naqshbandiyya philosophy made the ascent from the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* easier. Shaikh Ahmad considered the declaration of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani that the universe of loving (al-Wadud)<sup>2</sup> was superior to the realm of Being (Wujud) to be most significant in sufi thought, for this indicated that the Absolute and being were not identical. The Absolute or the Divine Essence, maintained Shaikh Ahmad, was self-existent and therefore there was no necessity for a concept of Being; however, if a belief in Being was held, it should be asserted that an Absolute was other than Being. Shaikh Ahmad claimed that consequently sufis would be drawn closer to the side of the followers of *Kalam*.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi divided those with views about Ibn 'Arabi into two groups. One group regarded him as one of God's favourite sufis and considered criticism against him to be wrong and sinful, believing everything ascribed to him to be indisputably correct and reinforcing his ideas by reasoning and evidence. The second group reviled Ibn 'Arabi and his philosophy as misguided. According to the Shaikh both groups were guilty of exaggeration and extravagance and had departed from moderation. He himself claimed to be the only person to have adopted a moderate view about Ibn 'Arabi. Before the coming of Ibn 'Arabi, sufis such as Abu Yazid and Hallaj had expressed their ideas

<sup>1</sup>*Sharh-i Ruba'iyat*, Tashkent MS., I, f. 75a.

<sup>2</sup>al-Wadud is a name of God and rhymes with *Wujud*.

<sup>3</sup>*Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, p. 11; *Ma'arif Ladunya*, f. 58a.



of unity and union in a state of ecstasy. Abu Yazid had cried out 'Glory be to me!' and Hallaj had exclaimed 'I am the Truth!'. Ibn 'Arabi, however, had disclosed a new dimension to the overt expression of the Divine mysteries and knowledge. This had been a significant development in mystic thought and Ibn 'Arabi emerged as the leader of more recent mystics. His errors could be categorized as those of inspiration, just as the errors of a *mujtahid* in religious rulings could not make him a sinner. Shaikh Ahmad himself charitably ascribed some of Ibn 'Arabi's theories of which he did not approve to the results of mystical *sukr*.<sup>1</sup> In the *Sharh-i Ruba'iyat* he wrote that sufis called the phenomenal world ('*alam*) the '*ayn* (essence) of God, related to His self-manifestation, and not the '*ayn* (essence) of Being, although he did admit that some statements by mystics tended to confirm most suspicions of the '*ulama*.' The sufi statement should be understood in the sense that what someone called the '*ayn* (essence) was like the shadow which emanated from an object. The same reasoning could be applied to the dispute over the sufis crying *Hama Ust!* (All is He) while the '*ulama*' strictly adhered to the phrase *Hama Az Ust!* (All is from Him). But when sufis cried *Hama Ust*, they were referring to the different forms of His self-manifestations, said Shaikh Ahmad, and not implying that the manifestations were God Himself. The fact that the Divine manifestations emanated from Him alone was also not disputed. Therefore the sense of both *Hama Ust* and *Hama Az Ust* was identical; the semantic differences were based on different points of view. The Shaikh added that he sided with the '*ulama*' as their view was based on *tanzih*.<sup>2</sup>

Some of Ibn 'Arabi's ideas he consistently rejected; these were those which conflicted with orthodox Sunni beliefs on *tanzih*, prophethood, separate existence of the world, future rewards and punishments, orthodox views of good and evil, and the vision of God which he believed strengthened the stand taken by philosophers, *Mu'tazilas* and Shi'is. Shaikh Ahmad unequivocally endorsed the ethical aspects of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani's revivalist methodology and teachings and yet he refrained from outright condemnation of Ibn 'Arabi and his movement.

Shaikh Ahmad dealt in detail and at length with the views of Ibn 'Arabi and what he saw as their unethical implications in letters to his disciples. But to members of the nobility and others who were not closely connected with sufism, Shaikh Ahmad explained the controversy in simple words. To Shaikh Farid Bukhari he wrote that a belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, which incorporated total rejection of the external and the acceptance only of the reality of the One Being, was contrary to reason and the Shari'a, whereas the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, calling attention to a

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 266.

<sup>2</sup>*Sharh-i Ruba'iyat*, Tashkent MS., ff. 72a-b.



perception of the One, did not violate any principle. Repeating the old sufi analogy of the sun and the stars he argued that it was not correct to state that at sunrise the stars became extinct and no longer existed. One could say that the stars were not visible at some times. In fact, if one was unable to see stars that was because of the predominance of the light of the sun and the feebleness of human vision. Sufi phrases such as 'I am God' and 'Glory be to me' should be interpreted as confirming the truth of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. When mystics like Hallaj or Abu Yazid made such ecstatic utterances they perceived nothing external but God. The phrase 'I am God' meant 'only God is here and not I'. The saint who could not see himself was unable to make any statement about himself. Were he to make such a statement with consciousness of himself, ignoring God, he would be an infidel. The failure to affirm positively a truth did not mean it was rejected out of hand, Shaikh Ahmad added. The *Wahdat al-Wujud* essentially meant the failure to affirm positively the reality of physical existence.<sup>1</sup>

To a sufi rival, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz of Jaunpur, he wrote that Ibn 'Arabi and his followers believed that the names and attributes of the Absolute were the '*ayn* (essence) of Being and were the '*ayn* of each other. For example, as knowledge and omnipotence were the '*ayn* of the Absolute they were also mutually identical. In the realm of the Absolute (in the state of non-determination) names, numbers, multiplicity, determinations and distinctions were meaningless. It was only in the realm of the Absolute as Mind (in the state of determination) that ranks and determinations emerged, and names and attributes became significant. In the realm of the Absolute there were two aspects of determination. The first phase of determination was still essence (*ijmali*), and attributes and multiplicity were implicitly contained in it. This plane was known as *wahdat* (primordial Unity) or *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* (Reality of Muhammad). The second plane of determination of the Absolute was known as *Wahdiyya* (Unity) and it contained the reality of all contingent beings. The realities of a contingent being were known as permanent archetypes (*a'yan-i sabita*). The *Wahdat* and the *Wahdiyya* were identified on the plane of the non-determination of the Absolute with the realm of "Necessary By Itself". The followers of Ibn 'Arabi asserted that the permanent archetypes did not exist externally, but in the Divine consciousness alone. Their existence was confined to the category of reflections or modes of the Absolute, just as a man who saw his reflection in a mirror, in his imagination identified it with his own being, when it was a vision alone, as nothing either dwelt (*hulul*) in the mirror or was engraved on it. However, since these imaginary forms and images were in fact the creation of God (on the plane of the Divine Mind), they were

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 43.



not effaced through the disappearance of imagination or fantasy and were subject to external reward and punishment. The apparent multiplicity was divided into three categories: firstly that determined in the realm of the spirit; secondly that determined in the realm of images, and thirdly that determined in the realm of the physical. To the followers of Ibn 'Arabi the phenomenal world was nothing but an external determination in the realm of the Divine Mind and belonged to the category of contingent existence.

While Ibn 'Arabi and his followers believed the phenomenal world to be an aspect of the Divine mind reflected in the mirror of the Being or the Absolute, he also, as Shaikh Ahmad admitted, perceived the phenomenal world both as a manifestation and creation. Contesting Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy, Shaikh Ahmad reminded his followers that one could say that in the realm of primordality 'God Most High is Being' (Allah Ta'ala *Wujud*) but not 'God Most High exists' (Allah Ta'ala *Mawjud*). On the second plane, which Shaikh Ahmad called *zill* (adumbration), the expression 'God Most High exists' could be used. Shaikh Ahmad thought sufis and philosophers who identified the Absolute with Being failed to discriminate between primordality and adumbration. It was their blindest spot.

Shaikh Ahmad took issue with the followers of Ibn 'Arabi over the question of attributes, and asserted that even at the level of primordality there were real external existents. The *sifat-i samaniyya* (eight Divine attributes) were external to God and were themselves mutually exclusive. For example, knowledge was the antithesis of ignorance, and power was the antithesis of weakness. The realities of the contingents were the antithesis of the Divine attributes. In short, to Ibn 'Arabi the realities of the quiddities were identical with the names and attributes in the Divine Mind, but to Shaikh Ahmad the realities of quiddities were '*adamat* (non-existence) and the antithesis of names and attributes. The reflections of the names and attributes in the Divine mind which appeared in the form of '*adamat* were distinguishable from one another. Whenever the omnipotent God wishes to give an external existence to those distinguishable quiddities (which are on the plane of *zill* or adumbration), He does so because of His own power. Shaikh Ahmad warned that the process of images or the permanent archetypes of the contingent and their quiddities gaining a concrete form did not mean that the images in the Divine mind were separated from the realm of the Divine consciousness and obtained an external existence. The process meant that the contingents, on the basis of the images in the Divine mind, obtain an external existence which is different from their existence in the Divine mind. For example, an expert carpenter forms an image of a throne in his mind and then makes a similar throne externally. In this process, the image of the throne in the carpenter's mind which was the quiddity of the throne is



not separated from the realm of the carpenter's consciousness, but externally the throne obtains an existence on the basis of the image in the carpenter's mind.<sup>1</sup>

This discussion highlights Shaikh Ahmad's belief in the importance of the thesis and antithesis of the positive attributes on the plane of adumbration (*zilliyat*) and calls attention to his theory that God can be known not only through positive attributes but more effectively through their antithesis.

In a letter to his son, Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, Shaikh Ahmad admitted that in his earlier letters he had implied that the Essence of God the Glorious and Exalted was pure, absolute Being but that such a statement had emerged from a lack of true perception of the Reality. When he had obtained a true knowledge of the Absolute he was convinced that the Divine Essence transcended all concepts of being and non-being and that neither of the latter had access to the Divine Essence. It frequently happened, continued the Shaikh, that when the ultimate truth was not revealed sufis erroneously began to consider adumbrations (*zill*) as Reality; however, when the mystic consciousness was stabilized in its final form, the unreliability of the adumbrations was exposed.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad exhibited deep concern over the fact that Ibn 'Arabi's disciples had asserted that faith and righteous deeds emanated from the name *Hadi* (the guide to the way of God), while infidelity and sins emanated from the name of *muzill* (One who leads astray). According to them, both illumination and deviation depended on the Sun. The Shaikh considered this to be a misguided theory, for he believed God had given men power to choose their own course of action, and while God had created action man produced the effort. As a man's actions depended on free will, he was responsible for their consequences and rewards and punishments.<sup>3</sup> Shaikh Ahmad saw no conflict between human effort and trust in God. Sufis were not intended to renounce the world but it was their duty to assert the orthodox purity of Sunnism both in religious practice and the mystical way of life.<sup>4</sup>

The stabilization of a belief in the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* in Shaikh Ahmad's mystic consciousness synchronized with a firm conviction that he had been divinely commissioned to act as the renewer (*mujaddid*) of the second millennium of Islam. According to Muslims, Muhammad was the Seal of the Prophets but several Sunni traditions proclaimed God's promise to send a *mujaddid* on the eve of each new century in order to revive the purity of the *Sunna*;<sup>5</sup> the last of these was to be the Mahdi,

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 1.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 260.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 266.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 236.

<sup>5</sup>*Sunan Abu Dawud*, II, Cairo, 1959, p. 518.



who would be a member of Muhammad's family and would appear just before the day of resurrection. A number of eminent 'alims and rulers were accepted in each era as renewers. To Shaikh 'Abdul-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi it was the duty not only of the 'ulama' and sufis to reanimate the *din*, but nobles and rulers were also called on to perform the duties of a *mujaddid*.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad, whom we shall now refer to by the title of Mujaddid (renewer) of the Second Millennium—a title believed to have been mystically bestowed upon him—had even more special duties to perform. The end of the first Islamic millennium in Akbar's reign (1000/1591-92) had aroused elusive hopes for the future in contemporary sufi and religious leaders, but firm and diplomatic handling by the Emperor had averted a real crisis. Around 1018/1609-10 Mujaddid gave a new mystical orientation to the completion of the first Islamic millennium. He wrote:

After a thousand odd years the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* (the reality of Muhammad) ascends from its original station and unites with the station of the *Haqiqat-i ka'ba* (The reality of Ka'ba). At this time *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* assumes the name *Haqiqat-i Ahmadi* (the reality of Ahmad) and becomes the manifestation of the Essence of Ahad (Primal One). Both blessed names (Muhammad and Ahmad) become the embodiment of their (primordial) Originator (One or God). The former station of the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* will remain vacant until Christ descends and follows the Shari'a of Muhammad. At that time the *Haqiqat-i 'Isawi* (reality of Christ) will rise from its station and settle down at the vacant station of the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi*.<sup>2</sup>

This statement was based on a belief shared by the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* that Ahmad and Ahad were identical. Shabistari described it in an eloquent poetic form in the *Gulshani-i Raz*,<sup>3</sup> but the new twist given to this idea by Mujaddid was that after approximately one thousand years the station of *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi* would remain vacant until the descent of Christ or the day of the Resurrection. Mujaddid does not state clearly whether or not the vacant station would be filled temporarily by the *mujaddid* of the second millennium. Nevertheless the significance he attached to his own functions as a *mujaddid* upset his rivals.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Makatib wa'r-Rasa'il*, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup>*Mabda'o Malad*, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup>Whinfield, E.H., *Gulshan-i Raz*, London, 1880, p. 3, English translation, p. 2.

The One (Ahad) was made manifest in the *mim* of Ahmad.

In this circuit the first emanation became the last.

A single *mim* divides Ahad from Ahmad.

The world is immersed in that one *mim*.

<sup>4</sup>In the *Mabda'o Ma'ad*, the Shaikh wrote, 'Under our Khwaja (Baqi Bi'llah) four



About the same time, Mujaddid wrote to his eldest son, Muhammad Sadiq (who died in 1025/1616), that before the appearance of the Seal of the prophets the darkness which had filled the universe was removed by the visitation of various other prophets. However, after the death of Muhammad, God had given the '*ulama*' the status of prophets of the Israelites, and on the eve of each century had sent a *mujaddid* to renew the Shari'a. On the analogy that prior to the Prophet Muhammad a strong prophet was dispatched at the conclusion of each millennium, for ordinary prophets were unable to remove darkness (ignorance). Mujaddid put forward the idea that in his own time a perfect '*alim* and gnostic was needed to perform the same functions as previously executed by the great prophets. In this letter Mujaddid stated that no one in the past one thousand years had ventured to expound either directly or indirectly the mystical and theological knowledge he propounded. This remark can be construed as showing that he was convinced that he himself was the *mujaddid* (renewer) of the second Islamic millennium.<sup>1</sup>

Some months later Mujaddid wrote another letter, this time to his disciple, Mir Muhammad Nu'man, reminding him how, as each millennium was associated with religious changes of far-reaching significance, the Muslim (Sunni) community would be rejuvenated and reorientated through the Mujaddid of the second millennium, although the Islamic Shari'a could be neither basically changed nor replaced by a new one.<sup>2</sup> The letter indicates that Shaikh Ahmad considered he himself fulfilled this role and suggests that his statements should not upset others. In a letter written in c. 1028/1618-19 Shaikh Ahmad categorically informed the same Mir Muhammad Nu'man that the person who had added a new dimension to such distinctions as '*ilm al-yaqin*, '*ayn al-yaqin* and *haqq al-yaqin*<sup>3</sup> was a *mujaddid* of the second Islamic

people had got a distinctive position as compared to other disciples by way, each being devoted to the Khwaja according to his own respective spiritual achievements. However, Shaikh Ahmad was confident that such a galaxy of disciples and method of instruction and guidance had never been seen since Prophet Muhammad and thanked God for that gift. Although he did not have the good fortune of finding the company of Prophet Muhammad, the Mujaddid added, he was not deprived of the felicity of becoming one of the four companions of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah'. *Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>1</sup> *Maktubat*, I, no. 234.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, I, no. 261.

<sup>3</sup> In an early letter to Shaikh Farid Bukhari, the Mujaddid stated that *Tawhid-i Wujud* belonged to the category of the '*ilm al-yaqin*, and the *Shuhudi* to the '*ayn al-yaqin*; *Maktubat*, I, no. 43, *supra*, p. 122. In a letter to Mir Muhammad Nu'man, he reiterated that '*ilm al-yaqin*, '*ayn al-yaqin* and *haqq al-yaqin*, as understood by sufis, were only two parts of the mystic truth while beyond these there was another aspect of the '*ilm al-yaqin*, which was understood only by the Mujaddid of the second Islamic millennium who obtained light direct from the Prophet Muhammad.



millennium. Even the mystical members of the sufi hierarchy, the *aqtab*, *awtad*, *abdal* and *nugaba*.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Ahmad continued, received grace through the *mujaddid*.<sup>2</sup> Although his claims were quite straight forward, one of the Mujaddid's leading disciples, Shaikh Muhammad Hashim Kishmi, the author of the *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, expressed misgivings about them which were removed only after the Mujaddid informed him that Maulana 'Abdu'l-Hakim Sialkoti, a leading 'alim and metaphysician, had addressed him, (Shaikh Ahmad), as the 'Mujaddid of the Second Millennium'.<sup>3</sup>

The publicity surrounding this letter and the Mujaddid's claims, particularly in the first volume of his *Maktubat* compiled in 1025/1616-17 in which he advised his disciples of his unique theological and mystical achievements, caused something of a sensation among contemporary sufis and the 'ulama'. Even the Mughal noblemen were disturbed. Finally Jahangir, in his fourteenth regnal year (1619-20), summoned the Mujaddid to his court and ordered him to justify his claims of mystical ascent referred to in his letter to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah mentioned above.<sup>4</sup> Biographers of the Mujaddid asserted that his replies were convincing; nevertheless the Shi'i nobles managed to alienate the Emperor from the Mujaddid and had him imprisoned. However, Jahangir himself firmly stated that the Mujaddid's answers were unconvincing and that not only was he ignorant, but that he also appeared to be presumptuous and opinionated. In the interests of the Mujaddid himself, and to control public excitement, the Emperor therefore had him imprisoned in Gwalior fort in the custody of Anirai Singh Dalan.<sup>5</sup>

Naturally the Mujaddid's incarceration disturbed his family and disciples, although he himself showed great patience and serenity. To him the manifestations of God's *jamal* (grace) and *jadal* (majesty) offered identical satisfaction, *jadal* arousing greater hopes and satisfaction.<sup>6</sup> In Jahangir's fifteenth regnal year the Mujaddid was released and given a robe and Rs. 1,000 for personal expenses. Jahangir allowed him the choice of remaining at court or retiring to Sirhind. According to the Emperor, the Mujaddid described his imprisonment as an invaluable experience and he chose to live in the imperial camp.<sup>7</sup> The spirit dis-

<sup>1</sup>Hujwiri says, "But of those who have power to loose and to bind and are the officers of the Divine court there are three hundred, called *Akhyar*, and forty, called *Abdal*, and seven, called *Abrar*, and four, called *Awtad*, and three, called *Nugaba*, and one, called *Qutb* or *Ghawth*. All these know one another and cannot act save by mutual consent." Nicholson, R.A., *Kashf al-mahjub*, London, 1936, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 4.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 176, see *MRM*, p. 265.

<sup>4</sup>*supra*, p. 204; *Maktubat*, I, no. 11.

<sup>5</sup>*MRM*, pp. 286-96.

<sup>6</sup>*Maktubat*, III, no. 6.

<sup>7</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 308; *MRM*, 296.



played in the later correspondence of the Mujaddid is compatible with the claims of Jahangir; and the allegations of the Mujaddid's hagiologists that the Emperor repented of his action and promised to take measures to promote Sunni orthodoxy in the government, are undoubtedly apocryphal. One sufi source suggests that the Mujaddid admitted that the period of his imprisonment was a blessing, as it enabled him to memorise the entire Qur'an,<sup>1</sup> and this may be the more correct interpretation of the Mujaddid's reaction to his imprisonment.

For about three years the Mujaddid remained in the imperial camp. Part of his time was spent in delivering sermons, some of which were attentively listened to by the Emperor. A number of his disciples who were with him continued to receive spiritual guidance and he even expressed delight that the whole camp had been converted into a *khanqah*.<sup>2</sup> The daily routine of the camp appears to have convinced the Mujaddid that Sunni practices were flourishing and that it was not a haven of heresy.

In his eighteenth regnal year (1623-24), Jahangir celebrated the weighing ceremony on his 55th birthday; according to custom the equivalent of his weight in gold and other valuable objects were distributed to the deserving, among whom was included the Mujaddid.<sup>3</sup> By this time his health was deteriorating and, returning to Sirhind, the Mujaddid died on 28 Safar 1034/10 December 1624.<sup>4</sup>

About two years previously the Mujaddid had informed his third son, Muhammad Ma'sum, that God had appointed him Qaiyum.<sup>5</sup> The

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 587a-b.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, III, nos. 43, 72, 106; *MRM*, pp. 304-6.

<sup>3</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 370.

<sup>4</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 282-95; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 212-19.

<sup>5</sup>*Al-Qaiyum* (literally the Subsisting) is one of the ninety-nine names of God. The Mujaddid based his theory of Qaiyum (the mystical personality who directed and controlled all religious and worldly affairs) on the following two verses of the Qur'an.

Then We gave the Scripture as inheritance unto those whom We elected of our bondmen. But of them are some who wrong themselves and of them are some who are lukewarm, and of them are some who outstrip (others) through good deeds, by Allah's leave. (xxxv, 32)

Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo! he hath proved a tyrant and a fool! (xxxiv, 72)

The above verses, particularly the last, are used by the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to prove their own theory of the Perfect Man. The Mujaddid also endorses the view that the Perfect Man was the vicegerent of God on earth, but he substitutes the title Qaiyum for the Perfect Man in order to dissociate himself from the terminology of the followers of Ibn 'Arabi. To the Mujaddid, Adam was the leader of the *Qaiyums*, and then great prophets and apostles also were endowed with this honour. The third and the last category of *Qaiyums* included some rare sufis who in the second millennium of Islam were called upon to perform the same duties in relation to God as



holder of such an exalted office (in place of the Mujaddid) was intended to act as an intermediary between common Muslims and God, just as the ministers acted on behalf of their rulers. Mujaddid advised his son that as long as he was alive he would care for his (Muhammad Ma'sum's) spiritual welfare but the rest of the community was his concern. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum was his father's nominated successor but before dealing with his career, we shall give an account of the nature of the criticism his contemporaries directed against the Mujaddid's teachings.

### *Criticism of the Mujaddid*

In the preceding pages we mentioned that criticism of the Mujaddid had begun as soon as the contents of some of his letters were made known. As this had even occurred before the first volume of the *Maktubat* was published, after the appearance of this volume the situation became explosive. The Mujaddid himself attempted to clarify his position, dispatching a number of his *khalifas* to important towns in the sub-continent, entrusted with the arduous task of defending their *pir's* teachings. The most trenchant and analytical criticisms were levelled by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, a former admirer of the Mujaddid. Contained in a letter written to the Mujaddid sometime in 1031/1621-22, these criticisms were by far the most learned.<sup>1</sup> Although Mujaddid's admirers attempted to ridicule Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's letter, calling his remarks misinformed and misguided, the objections advanced by the Shaikh remain irrefutable when subjected to objective study.

Similar criticisms were made by other scholars too and they are summarized below, together with answers from the *Hazratu'l-quds* of Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sirhindi.

*Objection no. 1:*<sup>2</sup> Some sufis have objected that despite perfect *sahw* (sobriety) the Mujaddid has made statements apparently emerging from *sukr* (mystical intoxication). His reply was that absolute *sahw* was a characteristic of the common people who resembled quadrupeds, and that the *sahw* of outstanding sufis was blended with *sukr*, for those with *sahw* alone were unable to express mystical truths.

*Objection no. 2:*<sup>3</sup> Criticism of the Mujaddid's description of his mysti-

viziers did in relation to worldly rulers. The Mujaddid added that the *Khalil* (a sincere and intimate friend) of God was the Prophet Abraham, and the *muhibb* (beloved) was prophet Muhammad. About the role of a friend and beloved, the Mujaddid had no misgivings, nor for the role of a vizier, whom in relationship with the divine court he identified with a *Qaiyum*. *Maktubat*, II, no. 74.

<sup>1</sup>MRM, pp. 268-71, 286, 288-89.

<sup>2</sup>In the original no number is given to this objection.

<sup>3</sup>Objection no. 1 in the original.



cal progression detailed in letter no. 11 of the first volume of the *Maktubat*.

*Answer* : The objection is thoughtless and based on an ignorance of the sufi terminology in which what one achieves is distinct from what one perceives. For example, in the state of *sukr* one may imagine one is a king but nevertheless does not acquire that position. The Mujaddid simply stated that he found himself coloured in the reflection of the stage of Abu Bakr, never claiming to have reached that stage. When the sun is in the fourth heaven and its reflection illuminates the earth, this does not imply that the earth has reached the stage of the sun. Badru'd-Din then referred to the Mujaddid's letter to his disciple, Shaikh Hamid Banglai.<sup>1</sup> There the Mujaddid wrote that in his mystical progression a sufi could find himself soaring higher than other sufis who were unanimously considered as outstanding. Sometimes the sufi was confused to find himself rising higher than the Prophets, but in no case did he remain on a higher level than the eminent sufis or prophets. For example, if a king was assisted by a *zamindar* in gaining a victory, this did not raise the latter above the ruler. To conceive of oneself as higher than eminent sufis or prophets would be to achieve eternal perdition.<sup>2</sup>

*Objection no. 3* :<sup>3</sup> It is claimed that the Mujaddid refutes the principle of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* unanimously accepted by sufis.

*Answer* : The Mujaddid states that the *Wahdat al-Wujud* is only a preliminary stage in sufi ascension and that there are many higher stages. In summary, Badru'd-Din's argument is that the principle difference between the Mujaddid and other sufis is simply this : Sufis following the school of *Wahdat al-Wujud* believe that phenomenal objects are manifestations of the Divine Names and consider the epiphany to be the '*ayn* (essence) of the Divine. They assert that God is the Absolute Being and phenomenal objects are 'determined beings' and consider that the determination is merely imaginary and therefore non-existent. Contrary to this, according to Badru'd-Din, the Mujaddid has argued that the reality of phenomenal objects belongs to the realm of '*adam* (non-existent) thus mirroring the Divine perfection and epiphany. The unity of '*adam* with Being is impossible and the mirror of '*adam* cannot reflect Being. This makes creation different from Being. Mujaddid therefore does not believe that creation is non-existent. He urges that Reality should be attained by adhering to the orthodox form of Islamic monotheism and obedience to the Shari'a.<sup>4</sup>

*Objection no. 4* :<sup>5</sup> The statement by the Mujaddid in the *Mabda'o*

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 220.

<sup>2</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 112-23.

<sup>3</sup>Objection no. 2 in the original.

<sup>4</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 123-26.

<sup>5</sup>Objection no. 3 in the original.



*Ma'ad* about the reality of the Ka'ba and the reality of Muhammad demonstrates the superiority of the reality of the Ka'ba over that of Muhammad. This violates the Muslim belief that God was motivated to create the universe in order to create Muhammad.

*Answer* : The Mujaddid wrote that the reality of the Ka'ba was not contained in stone and rubble for the Ka'ba would survive even without these. Although the Ka'ba appears externally to have the reality of other objects, its reality in fact is esoteric and beyond the realm of the senses and the imagination; it is incomprehensible although it can be seen in form and its physical situation can be determined. In short the reality of the Ka'ba is identified with the Incomparable Essence and has no connection with adumbration. It is adored and worshipped. It is harmless to imply that the reality of Muhammad worshipped the reality of the Ka'ba. There is no doubt that the reality of Muhammad is superior to the realities of all phenomenal objects, however the reality of the Ka'ba has no resemblance to the reality of the phenomenal objects.<sup>1</sup>

*Objection no. 5* :<sup>2</sup> In a letter to a disciple,<sup>3</sup> the Mujaddid says : I am both a *murid* (disciple) and a *murad* (object of hope) of Allah. The chain of my discipleship is linked to God the Most High without any intermediary; my hand is the substitute of His hand. My discipleship with Muhammad is linked through several intermediaries such as in the Naqshbandiyya *silsla* where there are twenty-one intermediaries; in the Qadiriyya order there are twenty-five; in the Chishtiyya order there are twenty-seven. (But as has already been related) there is no intermediary as far as my discipleship with Allah is concerned. I am therefore both the disciple of Muhammad and (his) 'brother-disciple' thus being a disciple of Allah on both counts...<sup>4</sup>

*Answer* : This particular letter spurred Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi on to write a letter to the Mujaddid, which he had long contemplated doing, and also prompted a spate of other letters of criticism. The Mujaddid wrote a letter in self-defence.<sup>5</sup> He stated that an intermediary was needed for a sufi who, in complete obedience to the Prophet Muhammad, had not risen to such a height that his reality had united

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 126-28.

<sup>2</sup>Objection no. 4 in the original.

<sup>3</sup>To Maulana Salih Kulabi, *Maktubat*, III, no. 87.

<sup>4</sup>*MRM*, 268.

<sup>5</sup>*Maktubat*, III, 121, to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din. The Khwaja's letter referred to by the Mujaddid shows that the letter was written to Maulana Salih Kaulabi from Ajmir, not more than two to three years before his death. Although the Khwaja did not mention Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi by name, it would seem that he referred to his letter indirectly and sought a detailed reply. *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 128-39.



him with the reality of the Prophet. The question of an intermediary or infusion of the reality of the Prophet emerged in a situation when the two objects were different; in unity there was no (necessity for an) intermediary or mediation, there was no chamberlain; nothing was veiled. Unity depended on co-partnership with a sufi who was obedient, submissive and took the role of a protégé, the relationship with the Prophet Muhammad being comparable to that of a slave to a master. Moreover the reality of Muhammad was the compendium of all realities. Accordingly, the reality of a sufi obedient to the Prophet was an atom of that whole; the situation arose because of the Divine grace extended to the sufi and the Prophet's love for him.

As far as the question of the intermediary and mediator is concerned, they are not required in the mystical ascension of sufis endowed with Divine grace and sought by God. *Suluk* (mystical progression) was impossible without the assistance of intermediaries, but mystical ecstasy did not need any mediator. Nevertheless ecstasy was not possible without *suluk* being performed within the framework of the Shari'a, as many Hindus and infidels achieved levels of mystical ecstasy but remained imperfect because of their failure to follow the Islamic Shari'a, which ultimately led them to ruin and perdition.

It was also worth noting (the Mujaddid added) that to call oneself an Uwaisi (one whose training has been assisted by the spirits of the leading Wali Allah [protégés of Allah]) did not necessarily imply a denial of the significance of the role of a *pir*. For example, although Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar had been trained by his *pir*, he was also known as the Uwaisi of Khwaja Baha'u'd-Din Naqshband. There was no disrespect when the Mujaddid punned on the word Baqi.<sup>1</sup> His criticism of Bastami's ecstatic utterances was not intended to indicate his own superiority. This did not imply he (Mujaddid) himself was never influenced by *sukr*, for absolute *sahw* (sobriety) was a characteristic of the common people. When mentioning the superiority of *sahw*, he (Mujaddid) implied its predominance and not its absoluteness. For example, although Junaid was the recognized leader of those sufis who practised sobriety, his maxims were always impregnated with *sukr*. Finally Islam prohibited dispersing scandal. If there was an accusation of crime the history of the accused should be investigated. If he was a heretic or infidel his statements should be rejected and no attempt should be made to reform him. If the person concerned was a Muslim who believed in God and the Prophet, however, he should be given an opportunity to explain the charges.

*Objection no. 6:* The Mujaddid discredited statements made by eminent sufis of past ages.

<sup>1</sup>Immortal, everlasting, eternal; one of the names of God.



*Answer* : The Mujaddid, wrote Badru'd-Din, had great respect and love of past sufis and saints. His (Mujaddid's) criticisms were based on his own inspiration and mystical revelations and therefore he was fully justified in criticising the attitudes of earlier sufis. In the past, successive prophets had rejected the revelations of those who came before them, thus if one *wahi* (Divine revelation) could be superseded by another, a mystic inspiration could also be replaced by another one. The disputes and differences between the companions of the prophets and later those of the 'ulama' were errors of judgment (*ijtihad*). When a pupil had acquired the status of *ijtihad* he was bound to follow his own judgment, even if it meant contradicting his teacher. For example, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani bitterly criticized Ibn 'Arabi, while calling him a great spiritualist and praising him lavishly in other ways in his writings.<sup>1</sup>

Thus we can see the spirited defence mounted by the disciples of the Mujaddid of the teachings of their spiritual guide contained in treatises. The Mujaddid's successor, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, unceasingly penned letters to disciples and opponents alike, attempting to clarify points and to remove any doubts they may have had and to re-emphasize the Mujaddid's teachings. However, orthodox Sunni opinion was deeply disturbed by the Mujaddid's thesis that the *haqiqat-i Ka'ba* (reality of the Ka'ba) was superior to the *haqiqat-i Muhammadi* (reality of the Prophet Muhammad) and corresponding arguments.<sup>2</sup> The Mujaddid's enemies considered the Mujaddid's discovery to be an insult both to the Prophet and the Ka'ba.

During Shahjahan's reign, the departure for Hejaz of Shaikh Adam Banuri, an important disciple of Mujaddid, as will be expanded upon later, brought the Shaikh into direct conflict with the 'ulama' and sufis of Mecca and Medina. In the early years of Aurangzib's reign the Mujaddid's sons and successors were shown great respect and patronage<sup>3</sup> by the Emperor, but this failed to undermine the opposition to the Mujaddid and in fact the expanding power of the 'ulama' in Aurangzib's reign violently reinforced their orthodoxy. Qasuri quotes thirty-three *fatwas* from the 'ulama', *qazis* and *muftis* of India condemning in general terms those who were disrespectful to the prophets (most notably to the Prophet Muhammad) as being infidels, to be liquidated. Among those who signed the *fatwas* were 'alims from the tribal regions of the North-West, Qasur, Sialkot, Aurangabad, Nagor, Ajmer and Jahangirnagar (Dacca); fifteen were from Lahore, two from Multan, one from Qasur, one from Banur and one from Sialkot.<sup>4</sup> Although it is possible that

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 139-43.

<sup>2</sup>In the *Mabda'-o Ma'ad*, he claimed that none before him could discover that truth, p. 48.

<sup>3</sup>*infra*, p. 243.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 599b-603b.



representatives of other theological centres also may have signed similar religious decrees, it seems remarkable that of those referred to by Qasuri the greatest number were from the 'ulama' of the Mujaddid's home province, the Panjab.

The 'ulama' of Hejaz, as we shall soon see, also wrote *fatwas* against the claims and ideas expressed in the Mujaddid's letters. However, as has been said, at first, the Mujaddid's successors enjoyed considerable patronage under Aurangzib, though the situation then gradually changed in favour of the Mujaddid's enemies. In April 1679, after Aurangzib had reimposed *jizya* on Hindus and was marching towards Udaipur to impose Mughal paramountcy on the rebellious Marwar, anti-Mujaddid feelings assumed serious proportions and proved an alarmingly divisive factor among the 'ulama' and sufis, particularly among those of Aurangabad. The Emperor, in order to silence the opposition, at least where it was most vociferous, ordered the Qazi of the army, Shaikhul Islam to issue the following mandate (*hasbu'l-hukm*), dated 27 Shawwal 1090/1 Dec. 1679, addressed to the Qazi of Aurangabad.

It has recently been reported to our august and exalted Majesty that some sections of the *Maktubat* by Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi seem contrary to the beliefs of the Sunnis (*ahl al-sunna wa'l jama'a*) and that the followers of the afore-mentioned Shaikh residing in Aurangabad actively propagate and teach (the contents of letters) and that their beliefs are founded in those false teachings. Therefore this servant of the *Shari'a* (Shaikhul-Islam) has been ordered by His Imperial Majesty to write to that refuge of the *Shari'a* (Qazi of Aurangabad) that he should stop them (the followers of Shaikh Ahmad) from teaching and propagating such ideas. Should the Qazi come to know of anybody holding the above-mentioned false beliefs (i.e. against the *Shari'a*) originating in the *Maktubat*, the offender should be punished in accordance with the laws of the *Shari'a*.<sup>1</sup>

The real impact of the imperial decree in Aurangabad and other Mughal territories is not known, but the storm of opposition from other sufi orders and the 'ulama' supporting them, as we shall soon see, did not abate.

### *The Khalifas of the Mujaddid*

The most senior of the Mujaddid's *khalifas* was Mir Muhammad Nu'man. The Mir's grandfather, Mir Jalalu'd-Din, and great-grandfather, Saiyid Hamidu'd-Din, had been '*alims*' in Transoxiana. Mir Muhammad Nu'man's father, Mir Shamsu'd-Din Yahya Badakhshani, was born in Kishm, a district of Badakhshan. However, most of his life

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 603b-604a; see Appendix C.



was spent in Samarqand where Muhammad Nu'man was born in 977/1569-70. At the invitation of Mirza Muhammad Hakim, Akbar's foster-brother and Viceroy in Kabul, Mir Yahya migrated there. After the death of Mirza Hakim (on 12 Sha'ban 993/9 August 1585) Akbar appointed Raja Man Singh as his new governor in Kabul. Unable to tolerate a Hindu ruler, the Mir is said to have prayed for his own death to escape the humiliation of being under him. According to hagiologists God heeded his plea and he died the following year.

Mir Muhammad Nu'man, his son, was initially trained as a sufi at Balkh by Amir 'Abdu'llah Balkhi 'Ishqi. After travelling to India he learnt from a number of different dervishes. Finally he joined the Naqsh-bandiyya *silsila* as a disciple in Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's *khanqah*. With his mother, sisters and other members of his family he lived in a shabby old house near the Firuzabad mosque in a very impoverished state.

Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah then assigned his disciple to the care of the Mujaddid. Mir Muhammad Nu'man showed reluctance to transfer his allegiance to a new *pir*, but finding the Khwaja adamant in his recommendation of the talents of the Mujaddid, he acquiesced. After the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, the Mir accompanied the Mujaddid to Sirhind, where he continued to serve him with great devotion.

About 1018/1609-10, the Mujaddid appointed Mir Muhammad Nu'man as his deputy at Burhanpur. However he failed to make any impact on the local people because of the great popularity of Shaikh Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah Burhanpuri.<sup>1</sup> Returning to Sirhind he was forced to go back by the Mujaddid who assured him of his ultimate success. Soon he gathered around him a considerable number of disciples. When learning of his disciple's success, the Mujaddid reminded him not to become swollen with pride or to neglect his own spiritual progress.<sup>2</sup>

The letters written by the Mujaddid about the popularity of Mir Muhammad Nu'man indicate which group of Muslims Mir attracted as disciples. The *Hazaratu'l-quds* ignores the first failure of the Mir in Burhanpur but includes an outlandish account of the popularity of the Mir, even asserting that 100,000 Uzbek horsemen became the Mir's disciples in Burhanpur.<sup>3</sup> Although Akbar and Jahangir would never have been so rash as to despatch such a large military force composed of a single racial group to one outpost, it is probable that some newly-arrived Uzbek soldiers did become disciples of Mir Muhammad Nu'man.

The association of the Mir with Mirza 'Abdur-Rahim Khan-i Khanan

<sup>1</sup>*infra*, pp. 281-84.

<sup>2</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 331-32.

<sup>3</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 305.



(964/1556-1036/1627), the Viceroy of Deccan, with whom the Mujaddid had also exchanged letters, may have encouraged some people to enter the Mir's discipleship. In a letter to the Khan-i Khanan, the Mujaddid wrote :

The followers of this exalted *silsila* (the Naqshbandiyya) are rare in that region. The inhabitants there who are engrossed in *bid'a* are uncaring of this *silsila*. Many short-sighted followers of this *silsila* have also begun indulging in *bid'a*<sup>1</sup> to attract disciples. God forbid ! They are heading towards ruin and destruction of the *silsila* and other distinguished followers of this *silsila* are unaware of this action. . . It is incumbent on the disciples and those who wish the *silsila* well that they should help its *khalifas*. Instinctively man depends on society and seeks the assistance of his fellow beings for welfare and comfort. . . The interest of man lies in his dependence on others. Were he to be relieved of need and want, he would indulge in sins and disobedience to God.

The presence of Mir Muhammad Nu'man in that region is most important. I regard his blessings and spiritual attention towards you as invaluable. They are the source of your stability and promotion. More than a year ago Mir Muhammad Nu'man wrote of your virtues and your devotion to (the Naqshbandiyya) dervishes and himself. He also invoked my help to block your transfer from the Deccan. I directed my spiritual attention towards you and found that you were destined to make progress.<sup>2</sup>

This indicates that by 1618, when these letters seem to have been written, the Naqshbandiyya order had made little progress in the Deccan and that the Mujaddid had felt it necessary to write a letter of recommendation to the viceroy. Strict puritanism, a feature of Mir Muhammad Nu'man's missionary activity, might also have been an obstacle to the progress of his order in Burhanpur.

In another letter the Mir received from the Mujaddid, he was invited to express gratitude to Allah for being given the grace to follow Sunni rules and for the privilege of entering the Naqshbandiyya order. The Mujaddid added that a single step along the sufic journey, in obedience to the Naqshbandiyya rules, was equivalent to seven in the rules of other orders of mystics. The goal of these was the perfection of sainthood (*wilaya*) and their rules did not unfold the stage of the perfection of prophethood. As he had stated in his other epistles, the Shaikh reiterated that Naqshbandiyyas followed the path already trodden by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad and therefore received benefits from such a heritage.

<sup>1</sup>It would seem that the popularity of the *Sama'* practised by Shaikh Muhammad 'Isa in Burhanpur prompted the Naqshbandis to imitate them.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 62.



Some time before his death the Mujaddid sent another *khalifa*, Muhammad Hashim Kishmi, to Burhanpur. It is not known whether the Mir and the Khwaja collaborated as missionaries or whether the Mir left for Sirhind or elsewhere. Mir Muhammad Nu'man died after 1052/1642-43.<sup>1</sup>

Another senior disciple of the Mujaddid was Lahore's Shaikh Muhammad Tahir. He obtained a highly competent education as a theologian and was initiated into the Qadiriyya order by Shaikh Kamal of Kaithal, later becoming a disciple of the Mujaddid's father. Ultimately he became a disciple of the Mujaddid himself. As a teacher of theology he instructed Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id and Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, the sons of the Mujaddid, and both the father and his sons felt deeply indebted to him. The Shaikh's temperament was erratic, however, and after some time of restricted and monotonous life as a dervish attached to a *khanqah*, he fell in love with a Hindu girl. In his great passion for her, he adopted the lifestyle of the Hindus. Shaikh Tahir's friends, and his pupils, the Mujaddid's sons, were shocked to find Shaikh Tahir leading such a miserable life. At the earnest request of his own sons, the Mujaddid prayed for Shaikh Tahir although he knew that even Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir Jilani refrained from interfering with what had been divinely ordained. Shaikh Tahir then totally renounced his love, once more becoming a disciple of the Mujaddid.<sup>2</sup>

Again Shaikh Tahir incurred the displeasure of his *pir*, this time because of a presumptuous remark. Declaring his entry into the state of *fana'*, he asserted that even his *pir* could not deprive him of his (Shaikh Tahir's) great mystical achievement. The Mujaddid was so incensed at this claim that he mystically deprived him of his progress hitherto. Fearing total spiritual ruin, Shaikh Tahir lamented his actions. Ultimately the Mujaddid at the behest of the friends of the Shaikh, restored him to favour.

After some time the Mujaddid appointed Shaikh Tahir a *khalifa*, bestowing on his disciple the *khirqah-i iradat*<sup>3</sup> of the Qadiriyya and the *khirqah-i tabarruk*<sup>4</sup> of the Chishtiyya. Although Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah had made it a general rule not to encourage the Naqshbandiyyas to be initiated into other orders,<sup>5</sup> Mujaddid relaxed his own *pir's* rules in order to help expand the order. This was particularly necessary in Lahore where the extent of the Qadiriyya influence was so great.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 326-40; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 299-311.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 617.

<sup>3</sup>The sufic robe authorising one to enrol disciples in a particular order.

<sup>4</sup>The sufic robe given only for blessing and not for authorising enrolment of disciples. Shaikh Muhammad Tahir had previously obtained initiation into the Chishtiyya order from Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id Chishti of Saharanpur.

<sup>5</sup>*Maktubat-i Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*, p. 4.



In Lahore, Shaikh Tahir dedicated himself to the teaching of disciples. By this time, however, he had developed deeply ascetic tendencies. Leading a totally retired life, he refused to associate with the non-spiritual and rejected any *futuh* (gift) or land grant. His daily bread was paid for out of a small income from copies of religious manuscripts which he transcribed and also from paltry gifts from the pious. His life at Lahore was modelled on that of Miyan Mir's, which was an inspiration to anyone contemplating the life of a sufi. The Mujaddid, however, became concerned that Shaikh Tahir's lifestyle gave the impression that he was a *malamati*. He wrote to him that the *malamati* way of life was incompatible with the duties of a sufi leader and a missionary. Nevertheless Shaikh Tahir seems to have been less than interested in popularizing the Naqshbandiyya *silsila*. Accompanied by dervishes he travelled to Sirhind several times before his death on 20 Muharram 1040/29 August 1630.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din of Saharanpur was another noteworthy *khalifa* of the Mujaddid. Born into an influential family in Saharanpur, he was sent to Sirhind for further religious education. In 1008/1600 he lived in Sirhind in the cell of a sufi's *khanqah* and studied religious texts under the Mujaddid. Finding himself bored with study, Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din fell in love, the object of his affection remaining unknown, although it was possibly a young boy. After classes he would run to the house of his beloved, hoping to catch a glimpse of him. Mujaddid, who by this time was no longer his *pir*, advised him to concentrate on his prayers, and abandon a pursuit which would only retard his acquisition of knowledge. Sadly Badi'u'd-Din admitted that sermonizing would not assist him, only a miracle could cause a metamorphosis. The Mujaddid asked him to come to him the following day, but instead Badi'u'd-Din went again to stand outside his beloved's house. The Mujaddid rebuked him for breaking his word and ordered him to perform *wuzu* (ablution) and a short *namaz*, after which he took Badi'u'd-Din to his cell and imparted to him the technique of the *zikr*. Under the impact of his mystical personality Badi'u'd-Din fell into an ecstatic swoon, from which he emerged the following day. After this experience his earthly passion had disappeared; he continued his education under the Mujaddid, remaining his devoted disciple for the rest of his life.

For several years Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din performed mystical exercises before being ordered to initiate his own disciples. Subsequently he was transferred to Agra and was forbidden to leave without permission. According to hagiological sources, he was tremendously successful in inculcating a deep sense of piety among both the influential and fellow mystics alike. After some time he left for Saharanpur to attend to some

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 340-46; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 319-29,



personal matters. From there Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din went to Sirhind to visit his *pir* who expressed annoyance at his disciple's violation of his orders. Although Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din promised to return to Agra, the Mujaddid informed him that the opportunity for success and already slipped from his hands and that returning to Agra would be only at the risk of failure. Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din decided to take this risk, hoping ultimately to please his *pir*. The story of his actions upon his return and of his subsequent severe repercussions on his *pir* has been outlined by the author of the *Zubdatu'l-maqamat* :

Agra was the capital and full of violent military people. They had no sincerity or manners. When they visited Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din he severely admonished them regarding their religious life and told them of his splendid mystical experiences. Sometimes he discussed controversial spiritual problems with those who had no faith in mystic revelations and inspiration, which caused trouble. Things came to such a pass that he was unable to live in the town. The effects of this were not confined only to him (Badi'u'd-Din) but recoiled upon his pious *pir*. The sultan (Jahangir), who was an enemy of this group (orthodox sufis), summoned Hazrat Ishan (the Mujaddid) and imprisoned him.<sup>1</sup>

The account in conjunction with the charges levelled by the Emperor himself against the Mujaddid in the *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, and the indiscretion of his disciples as described by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi,<sup>2</sup> leaves little doubt that the ostentatious and offensive display of mystical achievements by the Mujaddid's *khalifas* created a climate most unfavourable to the propagation of his teachings.

After the imprisonment of the Mujaddid, Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din left Agra for Saharanpur, settling down there to an ascetic life of contemplation and *zikr*. He memorized the Qur'an and dedicated himself to theological education and to the instruction of a few disciples. However as late as 1031/1621-22 he claimed that he received visions of a very special nature and that the Prophet Muhammad had treated him with special consideration and given him good counsel. In a letter he also claimed that the Prophet had told him he was the *Siraj al-Hind* (Lamp of India) and directed him to increase his obedience to God.

In further correspondence Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din informed his *pir* that he had received encouraging Divine messages. Some of his disciples had also reported that they had achieved high spiritual status. In a short time they had become experts in the Naqshbandiyya perception of the presence of God. Some had achieved the state of *fana'* and were fully acquainted with the condition of the dead and with matters relating to

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 348.

<sup>2</sup>Letter of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, *MRM*, p. 286.



the next world. This success, added Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din, emanated from his own *pir's* (the Mujaddid's) blessing and was not to be accredited to himself. Some neophytes had abandoned their family and belongings, and their relations harassed Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din. However, some sufis who had been previously initiated into other *silsilas* and were then received into the Naqshbandiyya order were highly impressed with their new achievements, lamenting the fact that they had wasted so many years using the programme of other orders. This had made one sufi of Saharanpur a very bitter enemy of the Naqshbandiyyas, so that even Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah became the target of ridicule and abuse. Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din himself ignored what he termed this vulgarity.

Failures made Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din more sober in worldly matters but his confidence in his own mystical achievements never waned. He remained busily engaged in mystical exercises, continuing to be honoured by mystical revelations from the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Nur Muhammad, another leading *khalifa* of the Mujaddid, was a native of Patna. Before becoming a Naqshbandiyya he had had an extensive theological education and had consulted a number of sufis throughout India. Spiritual satisfaction was not to be achieved however until he visited Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and was received into the Naqshbandiyya order by him. Later the Khwaja assigned him to the care of the Mujaddid for further training. Along with Shaikh Tahir (who seems to have visited Delhi accompanied by his *pir*), Shaikh Nur Muhammad used to attend the Mujaddid's lectures on the '*Awarif al-Ma'arif*. During the lectures both Shaikh Tahir and Shaikh Nur Muhammad believed the Mujaddid ignored the most subtle points of mysticism in his lectures and thought that, as they themselves knew the literal meaning of the '*Awarif*' which the Mujaddid described, it was meaningless for them to attend his lectures. Supernaturally the Mujaddid discovered this and expelled them from Firuzabad Fort. Foiled, they spent their days in the jungle, and during the night they would stand outside the gates of the Fort. Khwaja Husamu'd-Din begged the Mujaddid to readmit them to his tutelage, only to receive the reply that their baser selves were swollen with pride and that the sufi life was not for them. The Khwaja asked that they be permitted to cleanse the foul cells in the basement of the Firuzabadi mosque. So moved was he by their humility in carrying out this task, that the Mujaddid forgave them their former arrogance.

From that time onwards Nur Muhammad remained with the Mujaddid, his obedient servant and pupil. About 1015/1606 he was appointed *khalifa* in Patna. There the Shaikh built for himself a hut by the Ganges with a small hay-covered mosque where he lived with his family, imparting religious and mystical education to those who came to see him.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 346-51; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 334-40.



The Mujaddid was highly impressed with his personal attainments, but was disappointed by his *khalifa's* lack of ability as a missionary;<sup>1</sup> he made few conversions to the order.

The Mujaddid discovered a talented youth from Bengal, who later became a *khalifa*, Shaikh Hamid. He was a native of Mangalkot in the Burdwan district of Bengal. He received his higher education at Lahore, qualifying for the ancestral profession of *qazi*. From Lahore he moved to Agra where he became the guest of Khwaja 'Abdu'r-Rahman Kabuli, a *mufti*.<sup>2</sup> Both Shaikh Hamid and Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman enjoyed each other's company, and were continually discussing theological questions. Hamid was a dedicated opponent of sufism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. When the Mujaddid arrived in Agra he stayed near 'Abdu'r-Rahman's house. Taking all his books with him, Hamid moved out of 'Abdu'r-Rahman's house in order to avoid the possibility of running into the Mujaddid with whom he was previously acquainted. Returning to collect a book he had forgotten, Hamid met the Mujaddid at 'Abdu'r-Rahman's house. There the supernatural impact made by the Mujaddid transported Hamid into a mystic ecstasy and he followed the *pir* whom he had wished to avoid when he left. After initially ignoring him the Mujaddid made him his disciple. Shaikh Hamid abandoned his books to become a sufi. After accompanying the Mujaddid to Sirhind, Shaikh Hamid became deeply steeped in the philosophy of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to such a degree that he began to see every worldly object as the embodiment of Divine love. After seeing a carcass of an animal with jaws wide open he exclaimed 'O God!', asking what he meant by manifesting Himself in that form.

Having completed two years of mystical training under the Mujaddid, Shaikh Hamid was permitted to return to Bengal to train disciples. Refusing the traditional offering of *khirqā*, he begged the Mujaddid to give him one of his shoes. Holding it in his teeth he set out on the road to Bengal. After going some distance, Shaikh Hamid put the shoe in his turban in place of a plume.

Arriving in Mangalkot, Shaikh Hamid built a cell near his house where the Mujaddid's shoe took pride of place. When approached for a cure he would ask the patient to bring him water in an earthenware cup. Then he would dip the point of the shoe into it. If the patient was destined to die the cup would break, while others were cured by drinking the water. Shaikh Hamid died in 1050/1640-41. The Mujaddid's shoe was placed in a niche near his grave where it continued to perform the same miracles even after his death, thus adding to the fame of the Mujaddid,

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 351-54; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 311-14; *MRM*, p. 277.

<sup>2</sup>The officer in a Muslim court who supplies the *qazi* (judge) with *fatwas* or rulings from the law-books on specific cases.



the former owner of this great relic. Shaikh Hamid's son Shaikh, Habibu'r-Rahman, succeeded him.

During his lifetime Shaikh Hamid had been a staunch follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The Mujaddid often wrote to him underlining the significance of his philosophy, although after some time Shaikh Hamid apparently stopped replying to him. Concerned, the Mijaddid asked Shaikh 'Abdul-Ha'i, whom he had appointed a *khalifa* at Patna, to visit Shaikh Hamid and to counsel him in person. Shaikh 'Abdul-Ha'i was warmly received, but during the ensuing conversation Shaikh Hamid asserted that his *pir* and other eminent sufis had argued that the love of the Prophet Muhammad was indispensable to a mystic, while he himself believed that he whose heart was dominated by the love of God could love nothing else. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'i was shocked that such a senior *khalifa* could make a statement which flagrantly violated the core of their *pir's* teachings<sup>1</sup> and was reminiscent of Rabi'a's<sup>2</sup> cry.

Although Shaikh Hamid admitted to feeling ashamed, he did not relinquish his faith in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>3</sup> Indeed the Bengalis who already so reverently worshipped the Prophet Muhammad's footprint welcomed any additions to their store of relics, and for them the puritanical reforms of the Mujaddid were meaningless.

The ancestors of Shaikh Muhammad Tahir Badakhshi, another senior disciple of the Mujaddid, were Turkish soldiers from Badakhshan. Shaikh Tahir was initially a soldier stationed at a fort in the Rustaq, who while marching to attack another fort, claimed to have seen a vision of the Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr and to have been ordered by them to renounce his military career after winning the battle. Single-handed Shaikh Tahir defeated the enemy, according to his biographers, and then disappeared into the forest. After exchanging his uniform for the coarse clothes of a villager, he visited local dervishes in Badakhshan. He then returned to become a sufi, offering to divorce his wife, only to discover that she too had decided to adopt the life of a dervish. On the advice of another sufi, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Jalil Bayanki, he left for Delhi to see other eminent sufis, but by that time Khwaja Muhammad Baqi had died. The Mujaddid, temporarily in Delhi at the time, enrolled Tahir as a disciple.

Shaikh Tahir never lost his simple Turkish habits, which greatly amused his *pir*. He always described his own mystical experiences in a naive fashion. Whenever his *pir* told of his own mystical revelations, Shaikh Tahir would cry out 'Truly ! Indeed !' in such a trance-like state that the Mujaddid would comment that the experiences were in fact the result of Shaikh Tahir's own inspiration.

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 367-68.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 354-63; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 314-19.



The Mujaddid sent Shaikh Tahir to Jaunpur, then the most significant intellectual and mystical centre in the whole of northern India. His posting to such a town indicates that there was an acute shortage of talented disciples among the followers of the Mujaddid. In Jaunpur the Shaikh's mystical life gave people the impression that he was a *malamati*. Sufi disciples avoided him and even such staunch followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* as Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz made the life of Maulana Tahir miserable. Some time in 1032/1622-23, the Mujaddid, then in Ajmer, wrote a severe letter to Shaikh Tahir. Lamenting what the Mujaddid called Shaikh Tahir's 'feeble-mindedness,' he remarked that the principal duty of a sufi was to further his own spiritual development, but were God to send some disciples he should devote himself to their training; *malamati* ways should never be adopted to attract disciples. He reminded the Shaikh of the essential need for mystics to pray to God most earnestly and to adhere to the laws of the *Shari'a*. Piety in the life of a sufi should never include the desire for fame. Popularity was no criterion for a highly successful spiritual life, as even infidels could receive notoriety. A group of disciples should not feel pride in how they had directed a disciple, for a *pir's* guidance never ceased. The Mujaddid reminded the Shaikh that a *pir* should never expect worldly gains from his disciples, nor nurture love of the material. The ideas expressed in the letters from the Mujaddid would hardly have reformed Shaikh Tahir, however, when the Mujaddid died, the Shaikh visited Sirhind. He returned to Jaunpur, where he was still living in 1053/1643 when the *Hazratu'l-Quds* was completed.<sup>1</sup>

Maulana Yusuf Samarqandi was a disciple both of the Mujaddid and of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. The Khwaja assigned him to the care of the Mujaddid. He died sometime during the Mujaddid's lifetime.<sup>2</sup>

From Bark, between Kabul and Qandahar, the Mujaddid acquired three eminent disciples. Of these, Maulana Ahmad Barki was the most important. Originally an '*alim*', the study of some of the Mujaddid's letters, given to him by a merchant from India, aroused his interest in sufism. Longing to meet the Mujaddid, he arrived in Sirhind in order to obtain mystic perfection, which he achieved in only one week, after which he was appointed *khalifa* in his own town. He earlier fame as an '*alim*' and his progress as a Naqshbandiyya made him prominent in the order. Letters written to him by the Mujaddid indicate his satisfaction in the Maulana's spiritual development. The Maulana died in 1026/1617.<sup>3</sup>

A talented disciple of Maulana Ahmad's, Shaikh Hasan Barki, also went to Sirhind to receive direct training under the Mujaddid and

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 354-67; *Hazratu'l-quds*, pp. 340-43.

<sup>2</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 367-68.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 368-70; *Hazratu'l-quds*, pp. 351-54.



returned to Barka with a letter of recommendation from him. The Mujaddid asked Maulana Ahmad to make Shaikh Hasan his deputy and to direct his spiritual progress. After the death of Maulana Ahmad, the Mujaddid appointed Shaikh Hasan his successor, urging Maulana Ahmad's disciples to respect the teachings of Shaikh Hasan and carefully to perform contemplative and mystical exercises under the latter. The activities of Shaikh Hasan in eradicating *bid'a* in the Kabul-Qandahar region greatly pleased his *pir*, and the Mujaddid's letters are encouraging, although one of them reminds Shaikh Hasan to avoid making critical remarks about ancient sages without fully understanding their message. After the death of the Mujaddid, Shaikh Hasan continued to write to his *pir's* successor, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, seeking spiritual guidance.<sup>1</sup>

Another sufi from Barka who obtained initiation directly from the Mujaddid was Shaikh Yusuf Barki. Originally initiated into another order, he wrote an account of his mystical experiences to the Mujaddid. The latter advised him to ignore the revelations and experiences which he had had as a follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, for they were observed only in the early stages of mystic development. The Mujaddid's advice to him to make further mystical progress prompted Shaikh Yusuf to visit Sirhind and to become his disciple. Later he was sent to Jalandar in the vicinity of Barka to work as a Mujaddidi missionary where he died in 1034/1624-25.<sup>2</sup>

Another senior disciple of the Mujaddid was Maulana Muhammad Salih from Kaulab in Badakshan. Impelled by his desire to become a sufi, he made the acquaintance of many Shaikhs. Finally he saw the Mujaddid in the Agra Jami' mosque and requested that he might become the Mujaddid's disciple. The Mujaddid prescribed for him the traditional Naqshbandiyya *zikr* formula but he was unable to make progress.

In a Ramazan month the Mujaddid retired to a retreat for prayer. Maulana Muhammad Salih offered to pour water on the Shaikh's hands for ablutions. One day, while in a state of mystical intoxication, the Maulana drank the basin of water in which the Mujaddid's hands had been washed, and was instantly filled with mystical light. Further mystical tuition by the Mujaddid sharpened Muhammad Salih's spiritual attainments and he was allowed to enrol disciples. Although the *Zubdatu'l-maqamat* does not specifically mention the area of his missionary activity, it was probably Kaulab. At the request of the Shaikh's sons, he also compiled an account of his *pir's* spiritual routine and the invocations and the Qur'anic verses he habitually recited. In the preface, the Maulana wrote that the daily routine of his *pir* was an exact replica

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 379-81; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 362-66.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 381-82; *ibid*, pp. 354-55.



of the Prophet Muhammad's. In 1038/1628-29 the Maulana died.<sup>1</sup>

Kishm, also in Badakhshan, was the home of two other talented disciples of the Mujaddid. One was Muhammad Siddiq Kishmi and the other was Khwaja Muhammad Hashim Kishmi. The former was a poet who left Kishm to serve the Khan-i Khanan 'Abdu'r-Rahim, a great patron of intellectuals and dervishes. In Delhi he became the disciple of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, but like some other disciples he also was ordered by the Khwaja to complete his mystical training under the Mujaddid. After the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, Muhammad Siddiq left for Sirhind to become a perfect *Sufi*. He abandoned his passionate dedication to poetry and wrote only occasionally. He made a copy of the draft of the *Mabda'-o Ma'ad* written by the Mujaddid. He also continued to serve the Khan-i Khanan and frequently travelled with his military entourage. In 1032/1622-23 he left India to make a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. His *pir* wrote many letters to him for his guidance, and had prophesied the exalted mystical position he obtained. He died in Shawwal 1050/January-February 1641 and was buried in Delhi in Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's cemetery.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Muhammad Hashim Kishmi, the author of the *Nasamatu'l-quds* and the *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, and the compiler of the third volume of the *Maktubat*, was the son of Khwaja Muhammad Qasim Nu'mani, a dervish and an 'alim of Badakhshan. His father and ancestors were followers of the Kubrawiyya order, but while still a youth Khwaja Muhammad Hashim was strongly attracted to the Naqshbandiyyas. During his early travels he stayed with Mir Muhammad Nu'man at Burhanpur, but in 1031/1621-22 he went to Sirhind and for two years travelled with the Mujaddid who at that time lived in the imperial camp. His *pir* was highly impressed with the Khwaja's spiritual attainments and sent him to Burhanpur. There he was more successful than Mir Muhammad Nu'man, probably due to his literary talents and gift for writing mystical poetry. He died about 1053/1643.<sup>3</sup>

Taliqan near Balkh was the home town of Shaikh Yar Muhammad Senior (Qadim). After obtaining initiation under the Mujaddid he went to Mecca, returning in 1046/1636-37. He frequently fell into ecstatic trances, and Rumi's verses on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* tended to unbalance him emotionally. In a letter, the Mujaddid reminded him that when a disciple approached him for initiation he should consider the question thoroughly, for often the initiation of a disciple gave a personal pleasure to the *pir*, thus retarding his own spiritual progress. It was therefore imperative that he should repeatedly resort to *istikhara*<sup>4</sup> before enrolling

<sup>1</sup> *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 370-71.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, pp. 372-76.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, pp. 1-5; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 368-83.

<sup>4</sup> Conciliating the divine favour; looking into the Qur'an for a good augury.



disciples, and await the instruction from the Divine will. Shaikh Yar Muhammad died at Agra before he was able to prepare a note on his *pir* to be included in the *Hazaratu'l-quds*.<sup>1</sup>

An important resident of Kabul who, after Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's death, became the Mujaddid's disciple was Khwaja Muhammad Sadiq. He was attached to the forces of Prince Salim at Allahabad, but resigned to become a sufi. By the time he reached Delhi, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah had died and, on Mirza Husamu'd-Din's advice, he became the Mujaddid's disciple at Sirhind. Soon he became his *pir*'s favourite disciple, accompanying him even on his travels. Once when staying at a place where drinking water was unavailable, the Khwaja who was quite wealthy, obtained water for his *pir* by camel directly from the Jamna. The Mujaddid refused the water, however, because he believed that since infidels worshipped the Jamna, drinking water from it implied showing reverence to it. But he added that it was not lawful to waste water, and that it could be used for cleansing after relieving oneself, although he himself refused to use the water even for cleansing. The Mujaddid sent him as *khalifa* to Lahore, but Khwaja Muhammad Sadiq died soon afterwards,<sup>2</sup> in 1018/1609-10.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hai came from Hisar Shadman, near what is now Dushanbe in Tajikstan, U.S.S.R. After migrating to Patna he was initiated by the Mujaddid as a Naqshbandiyya and was appointed his *khalifa* at Patna. While the surrounding areas were assigned to Shaikh Nur Muhammad, who lived a secluded life on the banks of the Ganges, the centre of the town itself was the sphere of activity of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'i. The Mujaddid regarded the presence of his two *khalifas* in Patna as the conjunction of two auspicious stars. Writing to Shaikh Nur Muhammad his *pir* informed him that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'i was an compendium of mystical knowledge and gnosis. He had reached sufic stages which transcended the *fana'* and *baqa'* commensurate with the Mujaddid's *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ha'i compiled the second volume of the *Muktubat*. When about sixty (c. 1054/1644-45), he went to Mecca on a pilgrimage and there is no record of his return to India.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Karimu'd-Din, another disciple of the Mujaddid, was born at Attock near Hasan Abdal. He first visited Lahore to receive religious education, but an overwhelming feeling that he should not die without first knowing God prompted him to dedicate himself to prayer and meditation. Later he left for Sirhind and found in the Mujaddid the perfect master who initiated him and ordered that he disseminate his teachings in Hasan Abdal. To begin with, he was ordered to have only ten disci-

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 376-78; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 343-44.

<sup>2</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 345-46.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 366-68; *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 375-76.



ples, later the number increased to seventy and finally he became an unconditional *khalifa*, authorized to initiate an unrestricted number of disciples. Shaikh Karimu'd-Din frequently visited his *pir*. He died on 3 Muharram 1050/25 April 1640.<sup>1</sup>

The Panjab was the home of a number of other important disciples of the Mujaddid. Of these, Shaikh Muhammad Tahir Lahauri has been mentioned previously. Two other significant disciples from Lahore were Maulana 'Abdu'l-Wahid and Maulana Amanu'llah. Maulana Abdu'l-Wahid was originally a merchant, and he was transferred to the Mujaddid's care by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. He was passionately fond of *namaz* and lamented that in paradise people would no longer be required to perform it and would simply reap the rewards of their spiritual labours.<sup>2</sup> Maulana Amanu'llah was a sufi of very strong ascetic temperament. In 1031/1621-22 he left to perform a pilgrimage to Mecca, refusing to accept money and provisions from his friends. From Mecca and Medina, he went to Syria and Egypt, and he does not seem to have returned to India.<sup>3</sup>

Hajji Khizr Afghan, who lived in Banur close to Sirhind, was a disciple of the Mujaddid's father who later made a pilgrimage to Mecca, visiting many countries in Arabia and Syria. After his return to Sirhind he became the Mujaddid's disciple. Many Afghans became Hajji Khizr's disciples, the most talented among them was Shaikh Adam Banuri who subsequently became the Mujaddid's disciple. Hajji Khizr was a great favourite of the Mujaddid, who often addressed his disciple by his pet name 'Khizra'. The Hajji had a beautiful voice, and during his time at Sirhind no-one else was permitted to call *azan*. He moved to Bajwara, but the death of his *pir* cast him in a deep state of melancholy and he also died soon afterwards.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Badru'd-Din, another talented disciple of the Mujaddid, came from his *pir*'s hometown of Sirhind. He became the Mujaddid's disciple at fifteen, and mastered the Mujaddid's technique of *zikr* performed without the use of breath control (*habs-i nafs*). By this time he was passionately fond of *zikr* and for the rest of his life he was unable to relinquish its practice. Starting with a mystical perception of the Absolute as both immanent and transcendent, Shaikh Badru'd-Din then went on to a perception of the state of the transcendence of God. The Mujaddid trained him step by step in his mystical discipline with as much devotion as he had his own sons, to whom the Shaikh was very close.

Shaikh Badru'd-Din lived with his *pir* for seventeen years.<sup>5</sup> During

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 385-88; *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 355-62.

<sup>2</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 388.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 388-89.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 383-84; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 347-49, 84-85.

<sup>5</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 157.



this period he began to literary career, starting with a book entitled the *Siyar-i Ahmadi* in which he discussed the mystical achievements of the Mujaddid. The draft was perused by his *pir* who blessed the author's promising literary career. To Shaikh Badru'd-Din's great disappointment, however, the draft of the *Siyar-i Ahmadi* was lost. After the death of the *Mujaddid*, the Shaikh compiled a book about the miracles which sufis performed after their death, entitled the *Karamatu'l-auliya*. He then translated the *Futuh al Ghayb* into Persian and compiled a dictionary of the technical terms used in the Naqshbandiyya and Qadiriyya teachings entitled the *Rawa'ih*. He also wrote a book called the *Sanwat-i atiqiya* which gave brief accounts of eminent personalities from Adam to his own day. In 1039/1629-30 he again prepared a draft biography of the *Mujaddid*, but the compilation of another sufi biographical dictionary, the *Majma'u'l-auliya* (1044/1634-35) held up the finalization of the manuscript on the life of *Mujaddid*. Later he entered the service of Dara-Shukoh<sup>1</sup> and was commissioned to translate into Persian the *Bahjat al-asrar*, an Arabic biography of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir. He then translated another biographical account of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir entitled the *Rauzat al-nawazir* from Arabic into Persian. Dara then ordered him to translate the Qur'anic exegesis of Ruzbihan Baqli entitled '*Ara'is al-bayan*. Finally he turned to the task of completing the *Hazaratu'l-quds*.<sup>2</sup>

From Deoband (Deban) in Saharanpur came a long-time devotee of the *Mujaddid*'s. Shaikh Ahmad Deobandi. Before becoming a Naqshbandiyya, Deobandi studied theology under the *Mujaddid*, and also travelled with him to eastern India, before settling in Burhanpur. After becoming the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah Burhanpuri, he moved back to Sirhind and was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya order by the *Mujaddid*. About the same time, Mir Muhammad Nu'man was sent back to Burhanpur by his *pir* and the further training of Deobandi was assigned to him. After living some years in Burhanpur, Deobandi again returned to Sirhind before being sent as a *khalifa* to Agra, where he became a retired ascetic. A Mughal officer who became his disciple took him to Bengal where he is said to have obtained considerable popularity. After some time he returned to Agra where he died at the age of seventy.<sup>3</sup>

Two early works on the *Mujaddid* fail to mention whether or not he appointed *khalifa* in Kashmir. It would seem that the presence of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud prevented the *Mujaddid* from doing so to

<sup>1</sup>This great admirer of the *Mujaddid* calls Dara-Shukoh Shahzada-i 'Ali Qadar (Prince of exalted rank), *wala guhar* (of noble lineage), *wali-ahd* (heir-apparent) *wasi-i 'asr* (guardian of the times), *Danish parwar* (patron of learning), Sultan Muhammad Dara-Shukoh. *Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 386-412, 157-60.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 384-85; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 349-51.



avoid conflict. However the Mujaddid was interested in Kashmir, and wrote letters to Kashmiri 'ulama' who were not necessarily his disciples. The Mujaddid's own father frequently visited Kashmir, and Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah also had spent some time there. It was Maulana Hasan Kashmiri who, while residing in Delhi, introduced the Mujaddid to Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. The Mujaddid's four letters to Maulana Hasan, three in Volume I of the *Maktubat* and one in Volume III, imply that Maulana Hasan remained in touch with the Mujaddid until the latter's death. Maulana Hasan was inclined to ask complicated questions and one letter (no. 100, volume I) provoked a stern reply from the Mujaddid. Earlier Maulana Hasan had asked the Mujaddid to explain the significance of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir Yamani's remark that Allah had no knowledge of the Unseen. The Mujaddid (faqir) replied:

The *faqir* (Mujaddid) is unable to listen to such statements as those made by Shaikh Kabir Yamani. Instinctively his "Faruqi vein" becomes agitated, and he is prompted not to explain or interpret them. He is unconcerned with the statements of Shaikh Kabir Yamani or Shaikh-i Akbar Shami (Ibn 'Arabi). His main concern is the statement of Muhammad al-'Arabi (the Prophet Muhammad). The statements of Muhi al-Din 'Arabi, Sadr al-Din Qunawi and 'Abdu'r Razzaq Kashi are not authoritative to him; he is concerned exclusively with the text of the Qur'an (*nass*). He does not bother about *Fass* (bezel, here meaning the *Fusus al-Hikam* of Ibn 'Arabi). *Futuhat-i Madina* (the thought had action of Muhammad) had made him unconcerned with Ibn 'Arabi and his ideas in the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya*. Allah the most high praises Himself because of His knowledge of the Unseen and calls Himself the Knower of the Unseen. Rejection of the knowledge of the Unseen on the part of Allah amounts to ignoring and neglecting God.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Kashmiri disciples of the Mujaddid was Shaikh Mahdi 'Ali of Supur.<sup>2</sup> He was a profound scholar who had visited Delhi and met many different sufis. Mahdi 'Ali often delivered letters from the Mujaddid's disciples to him,<sup>3</sup> and he himself received a letter from the Mujaddid which was included in volume II of the *Maktubat*.<sup>4</sup> Traveling from Kashmir to Delhi, Maulana Muhammad Sadiq Hamadani Kashmiri,<sup>5</sup> the author of the biographical works such as the *Silsilatu's-sadiqin*,<sup>6</sup> *Kalimatu's-sadiqin* and *Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, used to call on the

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 100.

<sup>2</sup>*Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, p. 132.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 279 to Maulana Hasan Kashmiri.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 52.

<sup>5</sup>*supra*, p. 23.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 226. This work does not seem to have survived, but apparently it is a biography of *Naqshbandiyya* sufis.



Mujaddid,<sup>1</sup> and write to him seeking clarification of sufic and religious problems.<sup>2</sup> In one letter he asked him to explain why contemporary sufis had failed to perform as many miracles as had their predecessors. The Mujaddid, who seems to have been touchy about this, wrote that if he intended to undermine the importance of contemporary sufis he was being misled by the devil. The performance of miracles was neither a condition of being a *wali* nor was it essential to achieve such status, although, conversely, it was a condition of prophethood. Nevertheless *walis* had performed some miracles, put those who did so most were not necessarily superior to the rest. Real eminence, the Mujaddid believed, could not be measured only by nearness to God, and those who were so blessed were never ostentatious in their performance of miracles.<sup>3</sup>

Later the Mujaddid again wrote to Muhammad Sadiq saying that as he lived in Sirhind with his sons and disciples that town was superior to others, and that it had the special honour of being the site of the tomb of his eldest son, Khwaja Muhammad Sadiq. In fact the light radiating from Sirhind, said the Mujaddid, was like that emanating from the Holy Ka'ba. A few months before the death of Muhammad Sadiq,<sup>4</sup> stated the Mujaddid, he had been shown that mystical light and although it was intended for his own (Mujaddid's) grave in Sirhind, his late son received precedence over himself.<sup>5</sup>

To Hajji Yusuf Kashmiri, who seems to have obtained formal initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order, the Mujaddid wrote stating his own interpretation of traditional Naqshbandiyya terminology such as *Nazar bar qadam* and *Hosh dar dam*<sup>6</sup> etc. For example he wrote that the *Nazar bat qadam* (watching one's steps) in reality means a mystical ascent in obedience to the Prophet Muhammad, and not, as usually understood, that mystical progress should attempt to rise to a stage not reached by others.<sup>7</sup>

It would seem that the Mujaddid did not have many *khalifas* from the state now known as U.P. One of his disciples, Maulana 'Abdul-Hadi, was from Bada'un. He too was an 'alim and who had been initiated by Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah. On his *pir's* orders, the Maulana accompanied the Mujaddid to Sirhind where he completed his training. He seems to have been appointed the *Khalifa* in Bada'un.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Kalimatu's-sadiqin*, pp. 262-66.

<sup>2</sup>Perhaps Khwaja Sadiq Sud, and Muhammad Sadiq Hamadani were not different. See *Waqi'at-i Kashmir*, p. 134.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 107.

<sup>4</sup>*infra*, p. 241.

<sup>5</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 22.

<sup>6</sup>*HSI*, pp. 95-97.

<sup>7</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 295.

<sup>8</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 381; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 344-55.



Saiyid Muhibbu'llah was from Manikpur near Allahabad. He first went to Burhanpur where he received initiation from Shaikh Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah. After meeting Mir Muhammad Nu'man, he learnt from him the Naqshbandiyya *zikr*, and also studied the ideas contained in the Mujaddid's letters. So impressed was he that he visited the Mujaddid himself and practised under him the various forms of the Naqshbandiyya contemplation and *zikr*. The Mujaddid then sent him to Manikpur where he failed to make any impact upon the townfolk, and so finally he was allowed to return to Allahabad and to lead a retired life in an uninhabited place, dedicating himself to repetition of the *zikr-i khafi*. Details of the rest of his life are unknown.<sup>1</sup>

Of those of the Mujaddid's *khalifa* for whom biographical details have been given above, fourteen were from Samarqand, Bukhara and the Kabul regions; six from the Panjab region; two were from Saharanpur; one from Kara Manikpur, one from Bihar and one from Bengal. They invariably declared that some supernatural event had prompted them to obtain initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order. Both the *Zabdat al-maqamat* and the *Hazratu'l-quds* suggest that the *khalifas* of the Mujaddid considered miracles the most important factor in the sufic discipline. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi considered the disciples of the Mujaddid to be indiscreet in recounting the Mujaddid's claims to mystical achievements. He divided them into three categories:

1. Those who had a blind faith in the Mujaddid's teachings and were unwilling to exercise their own judgment.
2. Those who considered the Mujaddid's teachings to be based on *sukr*.
3. Those who believed the Mujaddid's teaching to have been divinely inspired.

Miracles and extravagant supernatural claims were not however unwelcome to ordinary Muslims who were generally gullible and credulous. Devotees of other sufic orders did not fail to circulate anecdotes about the supernatural feats of their respective *pirs* and, in order to compete with them, the Mujaddid's *khalifas* had no alternative but to invite people to believe that the Mujaddid was the most outstanding protégé of God. It might also be added in defence of the *khalifas* of the Mujaddid that, as mentioned before, their *pir* himself claimed that God had made him the *mujaddid* of the second millennium and had conferred upon his successor the title of *Qaiyum*. To many of his disciples he gave the title of *Qutb* (Pole) of their respective regions, a very high rank in the sufi hierarchy. However, reports of repeated failures in popularizing the Mujaddidiyya mission prompted the Mujaddid to remind his disciples that too many disciples crowding around a *pir* retarded spiritual develop-

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 382-83.



ment. The inhabitants of Transoxiana and the Afghans were traditionally enamoured of the Naqshbandiyya order, and the Mujaddid and his *khalifas* should have been very successful with them, but the presence of many rival Naqshbandiyya *pirs* undermined their position. In this respect it would seem that the Mujaddid's programme for the eradication of the *bid'a* and the restoration of the pristine purity of the caliphate under 'Umar and the sufic traditions of Abu Bakr, in conjunction with the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, prompted some orthodox Sunni *mullas* and their followers to sufic initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order.

### *Sons of the Mujaddid*

The eldest of the Mujaddid's sons, Muhammad Sadiq, was born in 1000/1591-92. His doting grandfather began his education, reporting to the Mujaddid on the precociousness and gifts of the child. In 1008/1599-1600 the Mujaddid introduced his son to his *pir* who taught Muhammad Sadiq *zikr* and contemplation. Muhammad Sadiq's literary education was interrupted because of his rapturous ecstasy which led him to roam aimlessly about the streets bare-headed and bare-footed. When only eight years old, he is said to have excelled elderly ascetics in mystical achievements. He claimed to be able to know supernaturally of the rewards or punishments meted out to dead bodies in graves. In his letters, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah also prophesied Muhammad Sadiq's greatness.

Nevertheless Muhammad Sadiq also received an exclusive theological and mystical teaching. The most authentic summary of the Mujaddid's teachings are contained in his letters to Muhammad Sadiq suggesting that at the age of twenty or so he would be able to follow the subtle differences between the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*.<sup>1</sup> But Muhammad Sadiq died on 9 Rabi' I 1025/27 March 1616, a victim of the plague then raging in Sirhind, before he could succeed to his father. The plague also killed Muhammad Sadiq's two younger brothers, Muhammad Farrukh and Muhammad 'Isa and his younger sister, Umm-i Kulsum, who all died within the first twelve days of Rabi' I 1025.<sup>2</sup> Some time before the Mujaddid's imprisonment his last son, Muhammed Yahya, was born.

The second son of the Mujaddid, known as Muhammad Sa'id, was born in Shawwal 1005/May 1597. Educated initially by his father, elder brother and Maulana Tahir, by the age of seventeen or eighteen he was an expert debater in religious polemics. Moreover he was a very competent *Faqih* (jurist), and the Mujaddid, to save himself the effort of consulting learned works, would refer to his son for a final opinion on controversial points of *Fiqh*. He was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, nos. 234, 260.

<sup>2</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 300-8; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 220-23.



order by his father, but at his request the Mujaddid made his younger brother, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, his successor.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhammed Ma'sum, the third son of the Mujaddid, was born on 11 Shawwal 1007/7 May 1599. A few months later the Mujaddid came into contact with Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah; naturally he considered his son's birth auspicious for himself. From the age of fourteen, Muhammad Ma'sum began to tell of his attainment of mystical states that were generally experienced only by senior followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, and this prompted his father to prophesy that Muhammad Ma'sum was a future *Qutb*. Besides mastering the subtle points in his father's letters, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum also gained a perfect knowledge of the spiritual discourses which he privately communicated to his sons. Before Zu'lqa'da 1032/Sept. 1623, the Mujaddid made Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum his successor and informed him he had been appointed *Qaiyum* by God. In Zu'lhijja 1032/October 1623, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum visited his father at Ajmer and the robe of this exalted position was conferred on him.<sup>2</sup>

After the death of the Mujaddid his two sons chose to go into retirement. Both brothers, however, wrote letters to their father's disciples, to their own disciples and to others seeking spiritual guidance and clarification of the Mujaddid's teachings, particularly those on the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. In his letters, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum urged sufis to adhere strictly to the Shari'a, as mystical perfection was otherwise incomplete. He strongly condemned sufis who propagated the view that fighting against the enemies of Islam was the duty of those who were concerned with the Shari'a ('*ulama*'), while those who were involved with the *Tariqa* (sufis) were called upon to maintain peace and friendship with all men. To him such sufis were ignorant *mulhids* (heretics) who mixed with infidels (Hindus), asserting that dervishes were free of any hostility to each other. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum reminded them that the Prophet Muhammad, ancient dervishes, and the saints, had found great merit in reforming infidels. Peace with God's enemies was against the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and the clear injunctions of the Qur'an. He also noted with great concern that sufis who preached peace with all were opposed to Sunnis alone. In fact, he believed they did not love peace and were interested in destroying Sunnism.

Like his father, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum preached that *bid'a* should be uncompromisingly eradicated and the purity of the Sunna should be restored to sufism. *Pirs* were indispensable to the sufic path, but *pirs* who ignored the Shari'a were "thieves of the faith" and pious Muslims should avoid towns where they lived.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 308-15; *Hazaratu'l-quds*, pp. 234-61.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 315-26; *ibid*, pp. 262-95.



Although Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum did not correspond with any of the eminent nobles at Shahjahan's court, his orthodox Sunnism prompted Prince Aurangzib to invoke his blessing before he left on his Qandahar campaign in 1652. To beat the big drum of Sunni orthodoxy was likely to pay high dividends, for the Prince was marching against Shi'i infidels. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum's letter to him does not specifically refer to the Qandahar campaign, but deals with the importance of fighting the earthly passions. In sufi terminology, war against the carnal self is called the *jihad-i akbar* (the greater warfare), but Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum reminded Aurangzib that war against infidels (*jihad-i asghar*) was also singularly meritorious.<sup>1</sup>

In 1067/1656-57 Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, his elder brother, Muhammad Sa'id, his younger brother, Shaikh Muhammad Yahya, and about one hundred dervishes, left for Mecca. During their absence from India the sudden illness of Shahjahan precipitated a war of succession. They hesitated to return, but a prophesy about the success of Aurangzib, which Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum received at the tomb of Muhammad in Medina, prompted them to return. In Jumada I 1069/February 1659, when Aurangzib was *en route* to Agra after his victory over Shah Shuja' at Khajwa (near Allahabad), he was met by Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id and Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum to whom he offered a gift of 300 *ashrafis*. After the weighing ceremony on the occasion of the Emperor's 43rd solar birthday (Rabi' I 1071/November 1660), Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id received a *khil'at* (robe) and two thousand rupees. Curiously enough Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum is not mentioned in connection with this gift, although perhaps the money was intended for both.

In 1661-62 Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id again visited the Emperor at his request, but died on the return journey to Sirhind where he was buried in the tomb of his father.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum lived most of his life in Sirhind, visiting the court occasionally, and wrote a number of letters to the Emperor Aurangzib. He died on 9 Rabi' I 1079/17 August 1668. His fifth son, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, whom he had earlier sent to care for the Emperor's spiritual welfare, frequently violated the court.

The reciprocal love between the two leading sons of the Mujaddid was lacking among their own sons, and even during the lifetime of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id's sons were claiming their father's superiority. These rivalries continued to divide the sons and successors of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id and Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum. During the eighteenth century, the rise of the Sikhs and their

<sup>1</sup>*MRM*, pp. 379-84, 388-95, 403-7; Appendix C.

<sup>2</sup>*MRM*, pp. 380-81.



continuing invasions of Sirhind (also a centre of trade and the home of rich Muslim merchants) prompted the grandsons of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id and Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum to migrate elsewhere. Gradually Delhi became the main centre of their activity. The development of the Naqshbandiyya branch of Sirhind through the sons of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, the recognised successor to the Mujaddid, will now be traced.

Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum had six sons, the eldest of whom Shaikh Muhammad Sibghatu'llah was born in 1032/1622-23, and died in 1120/1708-9. The second son of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Hujjatu'llah Muhammad Naqshband, was born in Zu'lqa'da 1034/August-Sept. 1625, and died on 9 Muharram 1115/25 May 1703. Shaikh Hujjatu'llah's son, Shaikh Abu'l 'Ali, died some time during his father's lifetime, but his son Shaikh Muhammad Zubair, who was born on 5 Zu'lqa'da 1093/5 November 1682, became very famous around Delhi where he spent most of his life. He died on 4 Zu'lqa'da 1152/2 February 1740 in Sirhind where he is buried.

The third son of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum was Shaikh Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah. He was born on 1 Sha'ban 1037/6 April 1628 and died on 19 Rabi' I 1083/15 July 1672. The fourth son of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Khwaja Muhammad Ashraf, was born in 1048/1638-39 and died in 1117/1705-6.

The fifth son was Shaikh Saifu'd-Din (b. 1049/1639-40). As mentioned previously, his father had sent him to the court of Emperor Aurangzib. The chronicles of Aurangzib do not mention him after 13 Muharram 1080/13 June 1669, when Aurangzib visited him in the residence he had assigned for the Shaikh's use. Naqshbandiyya hagiologies assert that the princes and the nobles of Aurangzib's court obeyed the Saifu'd-Din's orders on all religious matters. The Shaikh died on 26 Jumada I 1096/30 April 1685.

The sixth son of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Shaikh Muhammad Siddiq, was born in 1057/1647-48. As a young man he made a pilgrimage to Mecca where he remained for some time before returning to Delhi. It is said that among his disciples was Emperor Farrukhsiyā (1124/1713-1131/1719). On 5 Jumada II 1130/6 May 1718 he died in Delhi.<sup>1</sup>

The successor of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, the grandson of the Mujaddid, was his son, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad. He died in 1142/1729-30. Of his disciples, Shah Gulshan was well known both for his asceticism and his passionate mystical verses. For about twenty years he lived in a mosque on the banks of the Jamna and died on 21 Jumada I 1140/4

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Hasan' *Masha'ikh Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 259-



January 1728-41.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Zubair, the grandson of Hujjatu'llah Muhammad Naqshband, was of ascetic temperament, but in obedience of Mujaddidi traditions he also exhibited an interest in training disciples. He died on 4 Zu'lqāda 1152/2 February 1740.<sup>2</sup> Among his disciples, Khwaja Muhammad Nasir (b. 1105/1694) was also closely associated with Shah Gulshan. In 1153/1741 a collection of Khwaja Muhammad Nasir's sufic lectures entitled the *Nala-i 'Andalib* was completed by his son and disciples. He carved out a new branch of the Mujaddidiyya-Naqshbandiyya called the *Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya*, which, after his death on 2 Sha'ban 1172/31 March 1759, was popularized by his son, the famous Urdu poet Khwaja Mir Dard (b. 1133/1721). Dard produced a massive book entitled the *'Ilmu'l Kitab*, propounding the essential features of the *Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya*, and wrote more than a half dozen treatises explaining his teachings. According to him the *Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya* was not a new Islamic sect, but was a new form of the Mujaddid's teachings. Proud of his descent from 'Ali', Dard tried to superimpose upon the Mujaddidiyya teachings love for 'Ali and the ten Shi'i Imams who succeeded him.<sup>3</sup> Dard himself made capital out of his descent from the eleventh Imam Hasan 'Askari, after which the family remained ineffective until its glory was revived by Khwaja Muhammad Nasir.<sup>4</sup> This view was totally against the Shi'i belief, and it did not even harmonize with the Mujaddidiyya traditions. Dard stated that in fact the *Wahdat al-Wujud* taught *Hama Az Ust* (All is from Him) rather than *Hama Ust*, and if sufis, like the 'ulama', chose to ignore the idea of duality, they could understand the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* better than any other concept. In his writings, Dard exhibited a deep sense of gratitude to the Mujaddid and his teachings and strongly condemned the *Wujudiyya* impostors who had become sufis merely in order to amass riches.<sup>5</sup>

During the eighteenth-century political crisis of India, Dard firmly withstood the vicissitudes of political upheaval, remaining in his Delhi *khanqah*, and unlike many others he stayed in Delhi until his death on 24 Safar 1199/6 January 1785.<sup>6</sup>

Another prominent Mujaddidiyya of the eighteenth century was Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar whose ancestors were members of the Qaqshal tribe of Turkistan and served with distinction in the early years of Akbar's reign. From about the 1580's on the Qaqshal came to be regarded by the

<sup>1</sup>Khwushgo, *Safina-i-khwushgo*, Patna, 1953, pp. 165-70.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, I, pp. 669-70.

<sup>3</sup>*'Ilmu'l-kitab*, Bhopal, 1309/1891-92, pp. 256-61.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, pp. 25-91.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, pp. 104-7, 183-89, 598-617.

<sup>6</sup>For a review of the poetry of [Dard, see Muhammad Sadiq, *A history of Urdu literature*, London, 1964, pp. 102-5.



imperial government as unreliable, and their fortunes declined. Mirza Mazhar's father, Mirza Jan, who served Aurangzib in a minor capacity, accompanied the Emperor to the Deccan. In 1110/1698-99 he resigned and left for Agra. Mazhar was born *en route* to the north on 11 Ramazan 1110/13 March 1699 and was given the name Jan-i Jan, which gradually became Jan-i Janan. The Mirza's father died in 1130/1717-18 but the Mirza pursued his religious and literary education even after his father's death and was later received as a Naqshbandiyya by Saiyid Nur Muhammad Bada'uni (d. 11 Zu'lqa'da 1135/13 August 1723), a *khalifa* of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din. The Mirza's friendship with Shah Gulshan who sharpened his taste for poetry. He also studied under Hafiz Sa'du'llah (d. 1152/1739-40), a leading *khalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad Siddiq, for about twelve years and after the Hafiz's death, became the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad 'Abid Sunnami, a *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad. After the death of Shaikh 'Abid on 18 Ramazan 1160/23 Sept. 1747, the Mirza started initiating disciples independently into the Mujaddidiyya order. He frequently wrote letters to his disciples expounding his own philosophy.<sup>1</sup> He warned newcomers to his *khanqah* that he was very poor and that they would be required to adhere strictly to the *Shari'a*. In spite of this, a large number of Ruhellas became his disciples. Once he had decided to initiate a disciple into the Naqshbandiyya order, he would supervise his progress sympathetically, with due regard to the psychological condition of the disciple. Teaching him that there was no real difference between *Wahdat al-Wujud* and *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, he declared that the entire controversy had emerged from a misunderstanding of sufi terminology. The problems of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were connected with the fundamental beliefs of Islam. Sufis described them according to their own mystical revelation and inspiration. To the true spiritualist, mystical experience based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were not imperative. He emphasized that the spiritual experiences and gnosis of the Mujaddid were compatible with the Qur'an and the Sunna, adding that the Mujaddid himself had been criticised and yet had managed to successfully refute his challengers. To the Mirza, such criticism was improper as he believed externalists should never question the saints of God. The Mirza also defended those disciples of the Mujaddid who made fanciful statements about their own mystical achievements. He affirmed that the Naqshbandiyya discipline attached little importance to the institution of *piri-muridi*, *ba'ya* and the offering to the disciple of his spiritual genealogy and cap, but centred its teachings around *zikr* and the attainment of tranquillity of heart, as well as in the journey towards God while under the influence of the *pir's* spiritual personality.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Shah Ghulam 'Ali, *Maqamat-i Mazhari*, Delhi, 1892, pp. 6-27; Na'imullah Bahra'ichi, *Ma'mulat-i Mazhariyya*, Kanpur, 1271/1854-55, pp. 15-17.

<sup>2</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhariyya*, pp. 36-44; *Ma'mulat-i Mazhariyya*, pp. 108-34.



Mirza Jan-i Janan asserted that Shi'i-Sunni disputes had no relevance to the essential Islamic beliefs. Early in Muharram 1195/January 1781, however, he shocked Shi'is by asserting that their perpetuation of the memory of the tragedy of Karbala 1200 years before, and their showing respect to pieces of wood (the *ta'ziyas* or models of the tomb of Imam Husain), was sheer stupidity. Consequently, on 7 Muharram 1195/3 January 1781, an Irani and two of his companions mortally wounded the Mirza with a pistol, and he died three days later.<sup>1</sup>

A distinguished *pir* in the Mujaddidi style, Mirza Jan-i Janan had also been a poet. His main poetic stimulus, the Mirza stated, was the ferment of love he had experienced while a youth. His rhythmic cries were called poetry, he said, and therefore he came to be counted among the poets.<sup>2</sup>

Mirza Jan-i Janan's successor was Qazi Sana'u'llah of Panipat, a descendant of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Panipati, an eminent sufi of the Sabiriyya branch of the Chishtiyyas. As a young student, Sana'u'llah became highly proficient in *Fiqh* and wrote a scholarly work on the subject, covering the opinions of all four schools of Sunni jurisprudence, as well as a work in Qur'anic exegesis in which he examined the various interpretations of recent scholars of exegesis. He also wrote a number of treatises explaining the teachings of the Mujaddid.

He first obtained initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order from Shaikh Muhammad 'Abid, and later became the disciple of Mirza Jan-i Janan, who allowed him to initiate disciples in Panipat. Initially Shaikh Sana'u'llah's puritanical teaching was unpopular, and the Mirza wrote reminding him to bear in mind the ability and level of understanding of the disciples he was training. It would seem that he heeded his *pir's* advice and became more cautious in denunciation of the *bid'a*. He lived in Panipat all his life and died there in 1225/1810.<sup>3</sup>

Maulawi Na'imullah, another disciple of Mirza Jan-i Janan, came from Bahra'ich in the eastern U.P. He was trained under the Mirza for only four years, but in that time the Mirza was highly impressed by his disciple's achievements. He collected his *pir's* teachings and daily routine, and anecdotes about him, into a work which became an important source for the Mirza's teachings. After returning to his home town and teaching there for some time, he died on 5 Safar 1218/27 May 1803.<sup>4</sup>

Sambhal was the home town of another of the Mirza's disciples, Maulawi Sana'u'llah Sambhali. He learnt *Hadis* and the translation of the Qur'an under Shah Waliu'llah, later becoming a disciple of the

<sup>1</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhariyya*, p. 17; *Ma'mulat-i Mazhariyya*, pp. 136-39.

<sup>2</sup>Mirza Lutf 'Ali, *Gulshan-i Hind*, Anjuman Taraqqi-i, Urdu, 1906, p. 217.

<sup>3</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhariyya*, pp. 66-67; Khaliq Anjum ed., *Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan ke Khutut*, Urdu, Delhi, 1962, pp. 197-209; *Khazinatul-asfiya*, pp. 689-90.

<sup>4</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhari*, pp. 81-82.



Mirza. He refused gifts from the wealthy and led a retired life in Sambhal.<sup>1</sup>

Another disciple of the Mirza, Shah Rahmatu'llah, was an ascetic who also insisted on existing without charity from the affluent of his time. Muhammed Hasan Arab was a very senior companion of the Mirza and an illustrious ascetic who spent every night in prayer and during the day stayed with the Mirza.<sup>2</sup> Maulawi 'Alimu'llah Gangohi, another disciple of the Mirza, hailed from the last resting place of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi but chose the Naqshbandiyya rather than Chishtiyya order.<sup>3</sup>

Of all the popular disciples of the Mirza who lived in many important towns of northern India, including Maulawi Kalimu'llah from Bengal,<sup>4</sup> the most important was Shah 'Abdu'llah, also known as Shah Ghulam 'Ali who succeeded the Mirza in Delhi. Shah Ghulam 'Ali was born at Batala in the Panjab in 1156/1743-44. When he was thirteen his family, migrated to Delhi. After an initial formal religious training he became Mirza Jan-i Janan's disciple in 1180.

Throughout his entire life Shah Ghulam 'Ali was a forceful defender of the teachings of the Mujaddid, asserting that the followers of *Wahdat al-Wujud* wrongly claimed that the sufi *ijma'* (agreement of the religious élite) endorsed their claims. Among the early sufis, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani was the leading opponent of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and of later sufis the Mujaddid had also opposed the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Between them, the two saints had thousands of followers; in these circumstances there could be no question of general agreement. Although Shah Ghulam 'Ali had learnt the *Hadis* from the sons of Shah Waliu'llah, he did not agree with the latter's view that the controversy between the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was semantic only. Shah Ghulam 'Ali admitted that Shah Waliu'llah was an outstanding scholar who carved out a new path for sufism, but considered him mistaken on that point in that he had undertaken a scholarly discussion of a subject which in fact belonged to the realm of mystical experience. The *Wahdat al-Wujud* was part of the initial mystical journey which was confined to subtle mystical changes in the heart; in contrast the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was concerned with the mystic journey in relation to the self. The mystical experience of the Mujaddid transcended both stages and the gnosis of Ibn 'Arabi was minor in comparison to the level reached by the Mujaddid. Had Ibn 'Arabi been alive in the days of the Mujaddid he would have been his disciple. Shah Ghulam 'Ali also asserted that no other sufic work in the world matched the *Maktubat* of the Mujaddid in

<sup>1</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhari*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 688.

<sup>3</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhariyya*, p. 69; *Khazinatul-asfiya'*, pp. 688-89.

<sup>4</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhariyya*, p. 82.



importance, and he believed that the criticisms of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq were founded on the latter's sense of self-importance and not on reality.

Shah Ghulam 'Ali was a simple mystic who braved the political storms and anarchic conditions of his time with great patience. He had no permanent source of income but somehow managed to help other needy Muslims. Toleration being one of his most valuable qualities, when asked his verdict on the behaviour of Yazid (on whose orders Imam Husain and his associates had been massacred at Karbala in 61/680) the Shah answered that he himself was the only person he knew who deserved to be cursed.

On 22 Safar 1240/16 October 1824, Shah Ghulam 'Ali died in Delhi and was buried there.<sup>1</sup> Shah Abu Sa'id, a descendant of the Mujaddid, was his leading disciple. He was born at Rampur on 2 Zu'lqa'da 1195/20 October 1781 and was educated by many eminent scholars, including the sons of Shah Waliu'llah. He visited a number of sufis but chose to become the disciple of Shah Ghulam 'Ali. He died at Tonk on 1 Shawwal 1250/31 January 1835.<sup>2</sup> Among his sons and disciples many were prominent in the nineteenth century in northern India.

After concluding this account of the Mujaddid's successors, we return to the seventeenth century in order to trace the history of the sons of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and his successors.

#### *Sons of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah*

Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah, known as Khwaja-i Kalan (the elder Khwaja), was born on 1 Rabi' I 1010/30 August 1601. His half-brother, who was born four months later on 6 Rajab 1010/31 December 1601, was named Khwaja 'Abdu'llah, and to distinguish him from his brother was called Khwaja Khwurd (the younger). Before Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah's death, when the two were still infants, they were given into the Mujaddid's spiritual care. But as time went on, he was distressed to find that the two young men had been filled with the ideas of their guardian, Khwaja Husamu'd-Din.

Of the two, Khwaja Khwurd, who left for Sirhind at the age of fourteen to be trained by the Mujaddid, had the greater powers of leadership and initiative. After several years of training, the Mujaddid initiated him as a Naqshbandiyya. Khwaja Khwurd's great attraction for *sama'* and his infatuation with beauty helped to make him an enthusiastic supporter of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The violation of the Mujaddid's puritanical teachings on the part of the sons of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah and their establishment of an independent Naqshbandiyya centre at Delhi was a source of great disappointment to the ardent renewer of Islam's second millen-

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 693-700; *Masha'ikh-i Naqshbandiyya Mujaddidiyya*, pp. 307-9.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, pp. 701-3.



nium. In a lengthy letter to them he re-stated the doctrines of Sunnism, calling their attention to the framework of puritancial sufism as defined by him (the Mujaddid).<sup>1</sup> By this stage, however the two brothers had already started on their own independent path and totally refused to give up the *sama'*. The Mujaddid also wrote to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din urging him to exercise his influence to stop *sama'* performances in the Delhi centre of the order, and expressing regret that his *pir's* sons refused to protect the pure tradition of their father.<sup>2</sup>

Khwaja Khwurd's sufism was strongly rooted in the principles of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, although he regarded both Ibn 'Arabi and 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani as perfect mystics and their differences as purely superficial.<sup>3</sup> He believed that the basis of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was some form of *nisbat* (mystic connection), but there the very notion of *nisbat* deprived the *Tawhid* of its essence and turned the unity into a duality. The '*arif*' (gnostic) had no independent existence; only the letters '*ain*, '*alif*', '*ra*' and '*fa*' used in writing the word '*arif*', were known, the rest was a secret of Allah.<sup>4</sup> The *Shari'a* was an outward impression of the *Haqiqa* but at no stage was it to be neglected. He reminded followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* that they should promote peace and harmony among themselves. He wrote a number of short treatises to popularize the principles of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and even wrote to Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum in an effort to convince him of the superiority of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Although he admitted that *sama'* was not a custom among the Naqshbandis, he expressed his intention not to reject it.<sup>5</sup>

Among Khwaja Khwurd's disciples, the most notable was Shaikh Abu'r-Riza, the uncle of Shah Waliu'llah. In the Shaikh's father, Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din, were combined the traditions of the *futuwwa* (Islamic chivalric orders) and of sufism. Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din served in the military, taking part in many wars under the Mughal nobility, but in later life he resigned to devote himself exclusively to prayers and penance. Later he felt divinely inspired to die a martyr's death and left for the Deccan to fight against the Marathas. When travelling close to the river Narmada towards the end of Aurangzib's reign<sup>6</sup> his caravan was attacked by robbers who killed the Shaikh among others.

Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's son, Shaikh Abu'r-Riza, lived for some time in a cell near the Firuzabad mosque, and was initiated as a Naqshbandiyya by Khwaja Khwurd. Shaikh Abu'r-Riza even tried to convince the Mujaddid's grandson, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad, that the *Wahdat al-Wujud*

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 266.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, nos. 267, 273; II, no. 26.

<sup>3</sup>*Bayan-i ahwal-o malfuzat-i Khwaja Khwurd*, India Office, Delhi-Persian MS. f. 146b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 174b.

<sup>5</sup>MRM, pp. 332-34.

<sup>6</sup>Waliu'llah, *Anfasu'l-'arifin*, Delhi, 1315/1897, pp. 160-61.



was the very essence of a mystical life and that the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was not a reliable mystical stage.<sup>1</sup> To him asceticism was the *sine qua non* of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He is believed to have rejected the Emperor Aurangzib's repeated requests to see him.<sup>2</sup> Each Friday the Shaikh would deliver religious sermons and discuss subtle sufi controversies at a small gathering of eminent sufis. The Shaikh died on 17 Muharram 1102/21 October 1690.

Shaikh Abu'r-Riza's younger brother, Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim was born some time around 1054/1646-47, and studied the basic Arabic texts under Shaikh Abu'r-Riza and an eminent scholar named Zahid Harawi. He started his sufi career under the tutelage of Khwaja Khwurd, but at the latter's suggestion he became a disciple of Hafiz Saiyid 'Abdu'llah Akbarabadi. The Hafiz was a *khalifa* of Shaikh Adam Banuri.<sup>3</sup> After the Hafiz's death, Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim became a disciple of Khalifa Abu'l-Qasim Akbarabadi. The Khalifa sharpened Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim's interest in sufi asceticism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, even going to the extent of forbidding him to serve on a board of scholars formed by Aurangzib to compile the comprehensive code of Hanafi law called the *Fatawa al-'Alamgiriyya*.<sup>4</sup> Abu'l-Qasim encouraged Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim to visit other sufi saints, too, and to benefit from their teachings, and he himself suggested he should see Saiyid 'Azmatu'llah Akbarabadi (d. 4 Rabi' I 1084/19 June 1673), an eminent sufi ascetic of Agra who had obtained initiation into the Qadiriyya, Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya and Shattariyya orders but who was predominantly Chishtiyya.

Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim avoided a public discussion on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* but claimed that he could convince the religious élite of its truth and could reconcile it with the Qur'an and *Hadis*.<sup>5</sup> Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim believed that control of the breath was indispensable for the performance of *zikr*. It offered satisfaction to the heart and blocked other ideas from entering. It enabled the devotee to perceive both the 'existing' and 'hidden' in the state of *fana*, and the Being as Eternal and Everlasting. Continuous *zikr* of *Ism-i Zat* (Allah) and *naft-o isbat* (La Ilaha Il-Allah) awakened reality of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) in the heart of the sufi so that apparent contradictions between the *Shari'a*, reason and *Tawhid* disappeared. The performer of *zikr* reached a stage in which the reality of *zikr* was united with the heart and he conceived of nothing but God.

An even higher form of mysticism was *muraqaba* (vigilant attention to God), a prior condition of which was the constant suppression of the

<sup>1</sup> *Anfasu'l-'arifin*, pp. 119-37.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, pp. 5-20.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, p. 24.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, pp. 80, 82.



baser self (*nafs*) and a dissociation from others. *Muraqaba* was calculated to recall the Unknowable God without using the instrument of language (Arabic, Persian or Hebrew). In the initial stages of *muraqaba*, concentration of one's entire being on God was difficult, but gradually the *muraqaba* effaced everything else from the devotee's perception, and his spiritual awareness assumed the form of instinct. The devotee was neither able to explain his mystical sensitivity and awareness nor able to impede. Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim added that the purified soul of a man was endowed with a capacity to assume the colour of its goal and to make the goal submissive to itself.

### Verses

If you think of a rose, you become a rose;  
 If you think of a restless nightingale you become a nightingale.  
 You are a part and He is a whole; but for some time;  
 If you conceive the whole you become the whole.<sup>1</sup>

As a teacher of sufism Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim always remained dedicated to Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy. In Delhi he founded a seminary where he also lecture on the mystical works of Jami imbued with *Wahdat al-Wujud* philosophy and on advanced commentaries on the *Fusus al-Hikam*. He also gave instruction on the works of *Hadis* and on the translation of the Qur'an.

Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim's learned son Shah Waliu'llah, in his *Anfasu'l-'arifin* described his father's miraculous and supernatural achievements. According to him the most important of these was his decision to remarry which he did when he was about sixty and had already had a son. Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim believed his own decision was divinely inspired.<sup>2</sup> From this union another son, Qutbu'd-Din Ahmad, later known as Shah Waliu'llah (Protégé of Allah), was born on 4 Shawwal 1114/21 February 1703.<sup>3</sup> It was he who was to fulfil his father's dream of immortality in the religious and sufi history of India.

While still a child the ascetic, scholarly environment of his father's house and seminary produced in Shah Waliu'llah a passionate dedication to learning. Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim personally attended to his son's education while also serving as a model of single-mindedness and perseverance both in religious practices and study.<sup>4</sup>

Shah Waliu'llah was a precocious student; at fifteen he had successfully completed the course of religious and literary education. Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim arranged the traditional feast given by parents on the completion

<sup>1</sup>Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim, *Anfas-i Rahimiyya*, Delhi, 1915, pp. 11-15; Ifadat-i Rahimiyya in *Al-Rahim*, Haydarabad Sind, February, 1966, pp. 595-600.

<sup>2</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>3</sup>*Al-Juz al-latif*, printed at the end of the *Anfasu'l-'arifin*, Delhi, 1897, pp. 193-94.

<sup>4</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, p. 85.



of the education of their sons. Giving him charge of his seminary, the Shaikh initiated his son as a Naqshbandiyya. On 12 Safar 1131/4 January 1719 Shah 'Abdu'r-Rahim died.<sup>1</sup>

The heavy family and teaching responsibilities which fell to Shah Waliu'llah after his father's death did not hinder his own progress in further studies and meditation. For twelve more years he studied advanced works on *Fiqh* from all four schools of Sunni jurisprudence. He believed that a Divine light had inspired him to choose the path set by the *Faqihs* whose knowledge was founded in *Hadis*. His contemplation at the grave of his father opened up to him the secrets of *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*). Thus he obtained a supernatural perception of sufism and his whole being was flooded with mystical intuition.

In 1143/1731 Shah Waliu'llah went to Mecca on a pilgrimage and then visited Medina. He met many eminent scholars there and in Mecca a number of them increasing his interest in the works of Ibn 'Arabi. The recurring visions he experienced of the Prophet and his family and companions, as well as other mystical inspirations God revealed to him, prompted him to call himself the *Qa'im al-Zaman* (Preserver of Time), who was an instrument of the Divine Will in the restoration of righteousness in his times, and who was a spokesman for the pious on the Day of Judgement. He recorded his visions and the reassurances received from the Prophet Muhammad in a work in Arabic which he called the *Fuyuz al-Haramain* (Bounties from Mecca and Medina).

On 14 Rajab 1145/31 December 1732, Shah Waliu'llah returned to India filled with schemes for redirecting the religious, social and political life of India. In order to relieve himself of the routine attached to his father's seminary, he trained one or two specialists in all branches of religious knowledge, while he devoted his main energies to lecturing on complex aspects, and to writing. By the time he died, he had produced a huge corpus of theological, mystical, sociological and philosophical literature. Although sufism dominated all his works the following were devoted exclusively to that subject:

1. *al-Qaul al-Jamil*
2. *al-Intibah Fi Salasil Auliya' Allah*
3. *Ham'at*
4. *Altaf al-Quds*
5. *Sat'at*
6. *Al-Khair al-Kasir*
7. *Lamhat*

Shah Waliu'llah claimed that his teachings bridged the gap between the *Shari'a* and the sufi *Tariqa* and that he reconciled the differences between the various theories connected with the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat*

<sup>1</sup>*Al-Juz al-atif*, pp. 195-96.



*al-Shuhud*. He believed that Divine grace, as well as his own intuitive knowledge and mystical clairvoyance, enabled him to perform the impossible task of smoothing differences and harmonizing (*tatbiq*) the traditional mystical and rational sciences of Islam and all the conflicting views and beliefs associated with them.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Ham'at* Shah Waliu'llah affirmed that there were two aspects of Islam, the exoteric and the esoteric. The exoteric was concerned with protecting the interests of the public good (that is, of the Sunnis). The esoteric aspect was intended to motivate the heart to perform righteous deeds and worship God. In all ages of Islam a group of scholars of *Fiqh*, *Hadis*, the Qur'an, and also Muslim crusaders, had been waging incessant war to stop the violation of the right principles of the faith. At the eve of each century a *mujaddid* was born from among this group whose primary aim was to strengthen the faith.

A second group was mainly concerned to protect the esoteric aspects of the faith called *ihsan*. In all ages sufi saints from this section had been leaders among Muslims, inviting them to be righteous and to regenerate their souls. In each age God assigned to his protégés (*auliya'* Allah) the duty of strengthening the esoteric aspects of Islam.

To Shah Waliu'llah the essence of the esoteric aspect of the faith was *ihsan*.<sup>2</sup> It was intended to reassure the devotee that he was witnessing God in front of him, but that, if this could not be achieved, he should continue in the confidence that his worship was being witnessed by God. Sufis who were endowed with either of these abilities were true manifestations of *ihsan*, performing the duties of protection and propagation of the esoteric aspects of the faith. In other words, to Shah Waliu'llah sufism and *ihsan* were identical and synonymous.<sup>3</sup>

Sufis endowed with the qualities of *ihsan* should be able to read the hearts of people through their own miraculous intuition and through Divine revelations. God empowered them to intervene in the general affairs of the world and their inherent spiritual power enabled them to perform miraculous deeds which in turn prompted a large body of disciples and neophytes to gather around them. A sufi leader reorientated the remembrance formulae (*azkar*) in order to regenerate the soul. He became the founder of a sufi order and others followed the mystic path he had devised, rapidly attaining their goal. After a while divine grace was diverted to someone else and a new sufi order emerged, the older one having become ossified. The birth of more than one *Quth*, each in a different country was also a distinct possibility.

The attraction and power of a *mujaddid* to Shah Waliu'llah depended

<sup>1</sup>*Budur al-bazigha*, Bijnor, 1936, p. 223; *Tafhimat-i Ilahiyya*, II, Bijnor, 1938, p. 217; *Al-Juz al-Latif*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>*Ham'at* (Urdu translation), Lahore, 1944, pp. 45, 51.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 43-50.



totally on divine grace. Thus, believed the Shah, the founder of an order was entitled to claim his own superiority and to assert that he held all the secrets of the sufi path. God created renewers of the *Tariqa* just as he did renewers of the *Shari'a*.<sup>1</sup> Although a number of orders were created, some were reorientated in a new form, and sometimes a new one combined with several old ones.

In short, Shah Waliu'llah believed that sufism had started with the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, and entered into its second cycle with Junaid of Baghdad. The third sufi cycle commenced with Shaikh Abu Sa'id Abi'l Khair and Shaikh Abu'l Hasan Kharqani, and the fourth one started some time before the Great Shaikh Muhiu'd-Din Ibn 'Arabi. This phase was mainly concerned with a discussion of the process of origination of the universe from God as the Necessary Being and the relationship of the latter with the former.

Shah Waliu'llah affirmed that all four cycles were equally favoured by God and respected by the angelic world (*al-mala'a'la*). However, he underlined the fact that any discussion of particular sufis should be made against a background of the recognized values of each age. The values and mystical intuitions of one age or cycle were not necessarily the yardstick of the values of other ages or cycles.<sup>2</sup>

Outlining the fundamental sufi practices, Shah Waliu'llah argued that the first stage of sufi development was obedience (*ta'at*) and that it was the root of sufism and *ihsan*. The sufi should first make his beliefs accord with what was practised by the companions of the Prophet Muhammad and their pious descendants. He should obey all the laws of Islam; avoid involving himself in controversy and the different interpretations of Muslim scholars, and disregard debates relating to the Unity of Being and its various determinations (*tanazzulat*). Finally, a sufi was unable to make correct inferences from the works of *Hadis* and the traditions of the companions of the Prophet, and should obey those laws laid down by one of the schools of *Fiqh* without involving himself in the hair-splitting debates of jurists.<sup>3</sup>

The next step in sufism was dependent on the role of the *pir*, and on his directions. He should prescribe the recollection formulae which dempens the novice's interest in the material world. On the whole, a disciple spends most of his time in prayer and observing obligatory and supererogatory fasts prescribed in the works of *Hadis*. Shah Waliu'llah added that his own father had ordered him to repeat *La Illaha Illa'llah* (*zikr nafi-o isbat*) a thousand times a day, sometimes showly and sometimes loudly. Mystic sensitivity, added Shah Waliu'llah, was also obtained by listening to religious sermons and by a contemplative recitation of the Qur'an.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Ham'at*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 67-69.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 60-61.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 71-75.



As far as possible sufis should lead a retired life, but they should not neglect the social duties which the Muslim community expects them to perform. They should visit people in order to improve their ethical standards; sympathise with the Muslims in illness, and call on people to mourn the dead. Temperamentally, mystics should be morose and stern. To the Shah, a sufi was no totally different from the ordinary Muslim and he himself always remained both an *'alim* and a *sufi*.<sup>1</sup>

The perfection of all the preliminary duties of a sufi, repetition of the recollection formulae, concentrated attention on Allah, and victory over all obstacles and impediments retarding spiritual progress, opened before him two different mystical roads, one relating to ecstasy (*jazb*) and the second to *suluk* (progression on the sufi path). To Shah Waliu'llah, although the Shari'a explained the road to *suluk* it did not describe that to *jazb*. To the Shah, *jazb* did not imply a loss of judgment and discrimination. To him it was calculated to draw aside those veils which covered the mystery of the 'determination of Being', whereas the process of *suluk* was to inculcate in sufis the psychological states of submissiveness, purity and divine love. *Pirs* could guide their advanced disciples who had perceived the realm of divine mystery to *jazb* but ultimate realization of it was dependent on divine grace.<sup>2</sup>

What the mystical exercises of sufis helped them to achieve was the first stage of *jazb*. This was called the *Tawhid-i Af'ali* (Unity of Action). It aroused in a sufi a state in which he perceived all motions, progression and recession as ensuing from the Being. He resigned himself to Allah but did not ignore the process of cause and effect. Those who acquired the *Tawhid-i Af'ali* began to perceive the realm of humanity (*nasut*) as a shadow of the realm of Divine mystery.<sup>3</sup>

The second stage of the sufic progression was the *Tawhid-i sifati* (Unity of Attributes). Here a sufi regarded different forms and manifestations as a theophany of the One Reality and was convinced that all differences were superficial. He saw the One in the many and the many in the One. He perceived in all human beings a Universal Man. For example, just as wax was a common factor in millions of wax models, so primal Reality pervaded the countless manifestations of *Wujud*. Sufis should perceive the primal Reality in every object as colourless and note that there was no contradiction or conflict between the primal Reality and the various manifestations.

When the sufi was permanently stationed in the second stage he proceeded to the third, the *Tawhid-i Zat* (Unity of Being). At this stage he could perceive Being, and all manifestations and forms disappeared from his visual sight. Sometimes, according to the Shah, *Tawhid-i Zat*

<sup>1</sup>*Ham'at*, p. 69.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 82-84.



appeared like a flash of lightning, then disappeared, but sufis were also permanently stationed at that stage. This did not necessarily imply that the sufi at this stage developed a belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, but that he had completed the third stage of the sufic progression to *jazb*.<sup>1</sup>

To the Mujaddid, the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was only a preliminary stage of sufic development, but to Shah Waliu'llah it was the final stage. He explained the philosophy in a number of his works, dealing with it both from the metaphysical and mystical points of view. He claimed that his arguments were divinely inspired and that God had granted him *mujaddid* (renewer) status, not necessarily superseding that of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi. Unlike many later sufis, he does not call the Naqshbandiyya branch of the Mujaddid the Mujaddidiyya, choosing to call it the Ahamadiyya (not to be confused with the Ahmadiyya),<sup>2</sup> after the followers of Ghulam Ahmad (1255-1839/1326-1908).

According to Shah Waliu'llah, the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* explain the relationship between the Absolute and *tanazullat* (descent of the Absolute) according to their own mystic intuition. The mystical clairvoyance of the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* can perceive all existent phenomena as modes and aspects (*shu'un wa i'tibarat*) or even accidents of Being rather than as independent phenomena in themselves. They explain the relationship between existent phenomena and Being by the analogy of the relationship between waves and the ocean. Their rivals reject such a position and affirm that this realization is only a temporary mystical phenomena. Shah Waliu'llah asserted that the position of the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* can only be understood by obtaining a correct perception of *ibda'*,<sup>3</sup> *khalq*<sup>4</sup> and *tajalli*<sup>5</sup> in relation to the *Nafs-i Kulliyya* (the Universal Self). Shah Waliu'llah maintained that he was the first devotee to whom God had revealed the correct perception of these terms. To all intents and purposes this was reaffirmation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

According to Shah Waliu'llah, multiplicity in the universe was indicative of the existence of a *Nafs-i Kulliyya* (Universal Self) which was the source of all forms of existence. An inexplicable process of origination known as *ibda'* which was distinct from *khalq* (creation) and *fayz* (emanation)<sup>6</sup> was responsible for the emergence of the *Nafs-i Kulliyya*. It

<sup>1</sup>*Ham'at*, pp. 94-98.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibda'* emerges out of self-manifestation by the Absolute Ghulam Mustafa Qasimi ed., *Lamhut*, Haydarabad Sind, n.d., p. 40. The first thing that emanates from the Absolute by *Ibda'* is *Nafs al-Kulliyaja*. *Tafhimat-i Ilahiyya*, I, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibda'* and its perfections give rise to the need for *khalq* (creation). *Lamhut*, p. 40.

<sup>5</sup>*Tajalli* or theophany is the process of self-manifestation of the Absolute. *Tafhimat*, I, pp. 191-92, 207-8, 220, 233.

<sup>6</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilahiyya*, I, pp. 55, 72, 109.



was the (power of the Absolute) overflowing existence from the pure non-being.<sup>1</sup> The Shah declared that Divine inspiration had revealed to him that the *Wahdat* (Unity) which most sufis witnessed in multiplicity, was nothing but the unity of the *Nafs-i Kulliya*. Only the contemplation of a few chosen sufis was able to unite the *Nafs-i Kulliya* with the Absolute; the rest followed their own path.<sup>2</sup>

The *Nafs-i Kulliya* in the stage of *ibda'* was also known as Universe, the Greatest Person (*Shakhs-i Akbar*) or the unfolding Being (*Wujud al-Munbasit*), but all of these were other than Being. Non-Being was the opposite of Being in a logical sense, but not the opposite of the reality of Being. Since human intelligence found it easy to grasp the nature of things through their opposites, it was difficult for sufis to fully see the reality of Being. Superficially the quiddities (both accidental and a combination of accidents) and substance were regarded as synonymous with *Wujud*, but according to the internal judgment of the *sufis* phenomenal existence (*mumkin*) was not the *Wujud*.<sup>3</sup>

The differences between *ibda'* and *khalq* can be explained by the nature of the relationship between God and the Universe, although the relationship between man and God can be understood only by a correct perception of Divine *Tajalli* (theophany). Shah Waliu'llah saw the universe as God's *Tajalli*, and the most exalted *Tajalli* (*al-Tajalli al-A'zam*) as unrevealed, eternal and a single entity. The *Tajalli al-A'zam* was neither God nor different from God. It descended as a Divine image following the descent of the *Shakhs-i Akbar* (Universal Self). The *Tajalli-i Wujudi* (theophany related to Being) was concerned with the manifestation of Being in different forms and predictions and was a process of external activity. The *Tajalli-i Shuhudi* (theophany concerned with Vision) was revealed to the mystic heart in different colours and ways in the event of the mystic drawing himself towards God with all the force he could muster. When the mystic was 'coloured with the colour of Omnipotence' in a state of *fana'* (extinction), he was transformed into the theatre of the *Tajalli-i Kamali* (theophany related to Perfection). The origin of the forms in which the *Tajalli-i A'zam* was manifested occurred in the theophany of the Divine name, Rahman (Merciful). Every mystical station (*maqam*) is sufic progression and gnosis was contained in the *Tajalli-i Kamali*.<sup>4</sup>

The theophany of Rahman, believed Shah Waliu'llah, could be obtained only by perfect devotion to God. He thought that he had assimilated the theophany of Rahman in an immaculate form and every part of his being was infused with it as a rose was infused in rosewater. Words

<sup>1</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilohiyya*, p. 34; *Lamhat*, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup>*Ham'at*, p. 154.

<sup>3</sup>*Lamhat*, pp. 9-10; *Budur al-bazigha*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilaahiyya*, I, pp. 65-66, 191-92; II, 207-8, 220-23.



failed him in his attempt to express such a perception; he could only admit that he realized God was manifesting Himself to him in all His glory and in different ways.<sup>1</sup>

After a life spent working incessantly for the regeneration of Sunnism, covering not only the religious and mystical life of the Sunni Muslims but also social, economic and political activities, Shah Waliu'llah died on 29 Muharram 1176/20 August 1762. The disciples he had trained were specialists in different branches of knowledge but many of the Shah's versatile attributes were inherited by his son, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, who was born on 25 Ramazan 1159/11 October 1746. His father personally saw to his education, going to the extent of writing a short Arabic grammar for him. The rarified intellectual atmosphere of his father's seminary stimulated his mind. After Shah Waliu'llah's death Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz took charge of the great seminary of his grandfather and father, also continuing his study under some of his father's eminent disciples like Shaikh Muhammad 'Ashiq and Shah Muhammad Amin.

Unlike Shah Waliu'llah who had died believing in a re-emergence of Sunni political power in Delhi, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz had the misfortune of witnessing the depredation of Delhi at the hands of political groups such as the Jats, the Marathas and the Sikhs, who his father believed had been liquidated. Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz was forced to take shelter in Muradabad with his family and followers, but he later returned to Delhi.<sup>2</sup> Equally repugnant to him and his orthodox Sunni followers was the domination of the Government in Delhi by the Shi'i Mirza Najaf khan (1772-82).

Finally in 1803 Delhi and the neighbouring regions were seized by the British East India Company. On 7 Shawwal 1239/5 June 1824, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz died. He had at the end been on peaceful terms with the British conquerors, who had restored some of his ancestral property, confiscated by a Shi'i wife of Mohammad Shah and had also offered his followers high posts in the British educational and judicial administration in Delhi, he himself being too old to be considered for an active job.<sup>3</sup>

Neither the pre-British state of anarchy nor the early uncertainty of the calm of the British period proved obstacle in the way of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz's enthusiasm to perpetuate and strengthen the religious and spiritual

<sup>1</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilahiyya*, pp. 76-77, 107, 193.

<sup>2</sup>Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz's letter to Shah Abu Sa'id Hasani of Raebareli, *Al-Rahim*, August 1965 from *Al-Furqan*, Lucknow, pp. 289-310.

<sup>3</sup>India Office Records F4/909, IOR Coll no. 25697, Letter of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz to Shah Ghulam, 'Ali Mujaddidi, *Majmu'a Fatawa-i 'Azizi*, Delhi, 1311/1893-94, pp. 91, 320-21, Index to Vol. I, *Press List of Old Records in the Punjab Secretariat*, Delhi Residency and Agency, 1806-57, & Case no. 3, Extract from the Proceedings of the Honorable the Governor General in Council in the Political Department under date the 16th July 1807. Panjab Archives of the Government of Pakistan, Lahore.



mission of his father. He compiled a Qur'anic exegesis, re-interpreted *Hadis* and wrote explosive works on Sunni-Shi'i polemics, adhering to the line taken by his father. Through his *fatwas* (juridical opinions) he attacked what he believed were sinful innovation in sufi mystical practices, such as the sacrificing of animals at the tombs of genuine or fictitious saints, and the lighting of the *menhdi*<sup>1</sup> of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Qadir.

Like his father Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz was a follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, although he remained aloof from the controversy between the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and *Wahdat al-Shuhud* philosophers. To him their differences were like those in the four schools of *Fiqh*, and one should not be ridiculed at the expense of another. He proclaimed that Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani was the leading exponent of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* among early sufis, and that of the many later adherents to this philosophy it was Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi who played the pivotal role.

Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz explained the argument of the school of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* by using as an analogy the rays of the sun. Although rays fall on both pure and impure objects they remain pure and unpolluted. What some regarded as a difference was in fact related to the understanding of priorities. Explaining the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* he again used the same analogy, pointing out that during the day the sun's rays reduced the stars to invisibility, giving the impression that the stars no longer existed. In the final stage of sufic progression one would see both the sun and the stars just as did those who followed the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>2</sup> In short, the *Tawhid* of the school of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, said Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, was concerned only with vision and sight; however, he added that a lack of understanding of the real meaning of the exponents of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* made many Wujudiyyas irreligious and antinomian.<sup>3</sup> This attitude Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz forcefully repudiated, holding up for particular condemnation the beliefs of Shaikh Muhibbu'llah of Allahabad.<sup>4</sup>

Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz's younger brother, Shah Rafi'u'd-Din, was born in 1163/1749-50. He commenced his education under his father and completed it under his elder brother. He also became a scholar and translated the Qur'an into the local dialect of Delhi which he chose to call Hindi. The supporters of Urdu, however, called it the first Urdu translation of the Qur'an. In the *Takmilu'l-Azhan* he maintained that the main dispute among the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was related to the question of whether *zill* (adumb-

<sup>1</sup>*Fatawa-i Aziz*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>The Mujaddid used the same argument to prove the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*; *supra*, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup>*Fatawi-i 'Azizi*, pp. 54-58, 93, 96, 130-31.

<sup>4</sup>*Malfuzat-i Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz*, pp. 263-66.



ration) was the 'ayn (essence) of the Being or different from it. The *Shuhudis* insisted that both were different, and affirmed the importance of this distinction. The *Wujudis* identified *zill* with the 'ayn without recognizing any differences at all. The Shah believed the dispute could be resolved by answering the question as to whether the *zill* of knowledge was knowledge or not. It was evident that the *zill* of knowledge was knowledge alone and this was equally true of all the *zills* of attributes. Therefore it could not be denied that *zills* were united with attributes and not independent entities. He also claimed that the Mujaddid had affirmed that quiddity was a thing identical to the thing itself, but that such a principle did not apply to the quiddity of the *zill*; as the *zill* was accompanied by its source, it could not exist independently in its own right. Commenting on the Mujaddid's theory, the Shah observed that there was no vital difference between the statement by the Mujaddid and the beliefs of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the only real difference was in the interpretation. The *Wujudis* did not attach any qualifications or conditions to quiddity, while the *Shuhudis* conceived of quiddity with qualifications and conditions. The Shah said that the *Shuhudis* paid greater attention to distinctions, while the *Wujudis* underlined unity, therefore it could be stated that from one point of view creation was the 'ayn of Being (*Wujud*), and from another the 'ayn was distinct from Being.<sup>1</sup> Shah Rafi' al-Dīn died on 5 Shawwāl 1233/8 August 1818.

The third son of Shah Waliu'llah, Shah 'Abdu'l-Qadir (1167/1753-1228/1813), made a more idiomatic Urdu translation of the Qur'an than had Shaikh Rafi'u'd-Din, completing it in 1205/1790-91. Generally he led a retired life.<sup>2</sup> The fourth son of Shah Waliu'llah, Shah 'Abdu'l-Ghani (d. 1203/1789), also led a retired life.

Maulana 'Abdu'l-Ha'i, the son-in-law and a disciple of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, was essentially a teacher. For some years, at the suggestion of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz he served the British government of Delhi, offering it legal advice. In 1818, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz advised him to become the disciple of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid of Rae-Bareilly who had arrived in Delhi from Rajasthan. Shah Isma'il, the son of Shah 'Abdu'l-Ghani, and a gifted scholar, also became Saiyid Ahmad's disciple. Both were far superior to Saiyid Ahmad in learning, but Saiyid Ahmad impressed them as well as Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz by his mystical achievement. Shah Isma'il's *Siratu'l-mustaqim*, *Mansab-i imamat*, and the *Taqwiyatu'l-iman* are a compendium of the family teachings and became the official handbook for the reform and militant movements which his *pir* subsequently launched.

<sup>1</sup>'Abdu'l-Hamid, *Wahdat al-Wujud we Wahdat al-Shuhud Men Tatbiq, Al-Rahim*, pp. 460-64.

<sup>2</sup>(Sir) Syed Ahmad Khan, *Tazkira-i ahl-i Dihli*, reprint, Karachi, 1955, pp. 72-75.



Saiyid Ahmad was born on 6 Safar 1201/28 Nov. 1786 in the Rae-Bareli district, then under the Shi'i Nawwabs of Awadh. He did not take much interest in his education and spent a great deal of time in developing his physical strength. When he was seventeen years old he travelled through Lucknow to Delhi where he met Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz who suggested that he study under his brother Shah 'Abdu'l-Qadir.

In 1219/1804, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz initiated Saiyid Ahmad into the Naqshbandiyya, Qadiriyya and the Chishtiyya orders. Early in 1223/1808 he returned to Rae-Bareli, where he began to urge Muslims to lead a strictly religious life. Four years later he became a soldier in the army of the predatory Pathan chief, Amir Khan, who was principal associate of the Maratha chief, Jaswant Rao Holkar. In 1809, Amir Khan began to help bands of Pindari bandits, but surrendered to the British in 1817. Amir Khan's army consisted of 20,000 cavalry and 8,000 infantry. The Saiyid was shocked at Amir Khan's decision, and in 1818 returned to Delhi where on Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz's suggestion he began to initiate disciples. Shah Waliullah's relations and friends were the first to accept him as their *pir*. The Saiyid also travelled through Meerut, Muzaffarnagar and Saharanpur where a considerable number of jobless people were attracted to him in his efforts to purify Sunnism of all the sinful accretions which had developed owing to Sunni association with Shi'is and Hindus. He also called his spiritual order the *Tariqa-i Muhammadiya*.<sup>1</sup> This order invited Muslims to lead a puritanical life, performing their regular normal worldly duties.

Once again he returned to Rae-Bareli, enrolling disciples *en route*. He stayed in his home town from Sha'ban 1234/June 1819 to Shawwal 1236/July 1821, and spent most of his time in touring the neighbouring district and enrolling disciples. The Shi'i government of Awadh was alarmed, but placated him in order to avert the dangers of a Shi'i-Sunni war.

At the end of Shawwal 1236/30 July 1821, he and his disciples set off on pilgrimage to Mecca, which Muslims had been avoiding at that time because of the political upheavals. Reaching Calcutta in Nov. 1821, he made arrangements for boats, dividing the 800-odd passengers into ten groups, each under a leader.<sup>2</sup> On 21 May 1822, the party reached Mecca. After performing the pilgrimage and visiting Medina they were back in Calcutta on 12 October 1823. Inspired by the success of the militant puritanical movement of Muhammad bin 'Abdu'l-Wahhab (d. 1206/1792) in Central Arabia which the Saiyid himself had witnessed, stimulated him to fight a *jihad* (religious war) in order to establish puritanical Sunni government from Peshawar to Calcutta.

<sup>1</sup>S.A.A. Rizvi, *Shah 'Abdu'l Aziz*, Canberra, 1982, pp. 474-77.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 221.



After initial preparations, the Saiyid left Rae-Bareilly on 6 January 1826, with his followers. Travelling through Gwalior, Tonk, Ajmer and Marwar he reached Haydarabad (Sind). From there he travelled with the volunteers he had recruited for *jihad* through Quetta, Qandahar, Ghazni, and Kabul, reaching Peshawar in December 1826. His puritanical reforms, particularly his interference with their marriage traditions, alienated several North-West Frontier tribes but he was able to seize Peshawar. On 24 Dhu'lqa'da 1246/6 May 1831, Saiyid Ahmad and Shah Isma'il were killed at Balakot in a bid to seize Muzaffarabad in Kashmir from the Sikhs. A considerable number of the warriors who escaped from the battle-field settled permanently in the North-West frontier regions and continued to harass the British Government which had annexed the Panjab on 30 March 1849.

After the death of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, the headship of his grandfather's seminary was assumed by his daughter's son Maulana Muhammad Ishaq (1778-1846).<sup>1</sup> The Maulana sought to assume both the religious and political leadership. He contended that those who advised the abandonment of *Fiqh* and sufism were Shi'i fifth-columnists. Politically, he tried to seek the co-operation of Turkey in order to establish the supremacy of Sunni Islam over India. In 1841 he went to Mecca and sought political asylum under the Ottoman Sultans.<sup>2</sup> Among his followers in India Maulana Mamluk 'Ali (d. 1850) was fortunate to have such talented disciples as Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi (1832-80) and Maulana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (1828-1905) who founded the famous religious seminary of Deoband in U.P. in 1867. This institution became the spear-head of the revitalization of the 'Ulama' in India, but sufism had no place in its syllabus. It taught the *Rashidiya* on Shi'i-Sunni polemics and *Shams Bazigha* and *Sadra* in philosophy; but neither the *Tahafut al-Falasifa* of Ghazali nor the *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*<sup>3</sup> of Shah Waliu'llah were included in its curriculum.

<sup>1</sup>According to H.H. Wilson, Junior Member and Secretary to the General Committee of Public Instruction, there were only ten students in the seminary. In 1824 the total number of students in all the seventeen Islamic seminaries of Delhi was 275. F4/909, IOR Coll no. 25697.

<sup>2</sup>Maulana 'Ubaidu'llah Sindhi, *Shah Waliu'llah aur unki siyasi tahrik*, Lahore, 1970, pp. 133-36. According to (Sir) Syed Ahmad, he was helpful to Indian pilgrims. *Tazkira-i Ahl-i Dihli*, pp. 81-82.

<sup>3</sup>Ziya-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*, Bombay, 1963, pp. 33-34.



## Chapter Five

### The Chishtiyya

THE emergence of the Shattariyya, Qadiriyya and Naqshbandiyya orders in the 16th century failed to undermine the significance of the Chishtiyya order in India. The immense devotion shown by Akbar and Jahangir to the shrine of Khwaja Mu'in'd-Din Chishti<sup>1</sup> further enhanced the great prestige enjoyed by the Chishtiyyas. During the reign of Akbar, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi's<sup>2</sup> *khalifa*, Shaikh Jalal, turned Thaneshwar into the major Chishtiyya centre in the whole sub-continent. Shaikh Salim Chishti and his *khalifas* managed to transform Fathpur-Sikri and the Agra region in a similar way. The eastern U.P. also continued as an important Chishtiyya centre. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries several new centres emerged in the Panjab. Among the new Chishti leaders were many outstanding personalities. By the end of the seventeenth century Delhi was again a great Chishtiyya centre in which the traditions of the glorious days of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya' were once more revived.

#### *Shaikh Jalal Thaneshwari and His Descendants*

The ancestors of Shaikh Jalal Thaneshwari were from Balkh and on both parents' sides he was a Faruqi. He was born about 874/1469-70; by the age of eight he had memorized the Qur'an and by seventeen his education had been completed. He began his career as a teacher and a *mufti*, delivering *fatwas* which were based on verses of the Qur'an. Deciding to adopt sufism he renounced his profession for tutelage under Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi. A natural ecstatic, he would have to be raised by his disciples from his trance with the words, 'Haqq, Haqq'. Obsessed with *sama*, Shaikh Jalal was known to make vigorous physical movements during the ritual.<sup>3</sup> Like other wellknown sufis he suffered unwanted attentions from leading members of the nobility and the government, although in general he refused to meet them. On his way to Kabul in

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 126-28.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 337-49.

<sup>3</sup>AA, p. 285; *Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 103.



February 1581 Akbar visited the Shaikh. Aroused from an ecstatic state by his disciples, when informed of the presence of the Emperor he ordered them to help him stand so that he might perform his obligations to his *khalifa* (Akbar) and then proceeded to recite *fatiha* (prayers) for the successful outcome of the Emperor's expedition.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari died on 14 Zu'l-hijja 989/9 January 1582.<sup>2</sup>

During his lifetime Shaikh Jalal wrote a treatise on revenue administration to illustrate the rulings on that subject of the Hanafite law-makers. It would seem that the disgruntled *madad-i-ma'ash* holders in Akbar's reign persuaded him to write it. Another of his works, *Irshadu't-talibin* was a guide to mystics. In it he mentioned that Divine lovers did not choose to arrest their spiritual progress when they obtained miraculous powers. They continued on the *Tariqa* until they were capable of ignoring all temptation. By then all attachment to anything material would have been severed, even to the extent of loss of life itself through neglecting such necessities as food and sleep. Lovers of the Divine avoided worship, piety and ascetic exercises, believing them to be evil. They sacrificed their lives, underwent hardships and died within themselves before their physical deaths thus becoming united with God in this life. As this path was highly complex it could lead to confusion among many sufis and impostors, resulting in harmful practices.<sup>3</sup>

The *Irshadu't-talibin* advised those entering the mystical life to discover a perfect and conscientious guide with a faultless perception of the *Shari'a*, *Tariqa* and *Haqiqa*. Like earlier Chishtiyyas, Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari based his training in *zikr* also on various forms of breath control (*pas-i anfas*).<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Jalal was succeeded by his son-in-law and *khalifa*, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din bin Shaikh 'Abdu'sh-Shakur. Following in the footsteps of his *pir* and many other Chishti sufis, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was an accomplished scholar and teacher of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He wrote commentaries on the *Sawanih* of Ahmad al-Ghazali<sup>5</sup> and the *Lam'at* of Iraqi,<sup>6</sup> a commentary on the Qur'an<sup>7</sup> and treatises called *Risala-i Haqiqat* and *Risala-i Balkhiyya*.<sup>8</sup> The first verse of the Qur'an, on Unity, was interpreted by the Shaikh as implying that the Prophet Muhammad invited perfect gnostics to accept the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>9</sup> The other

<sup>1</sup>*Akbar-nama*, III, pp. 341-42; *Majma'ul-auliya'*, f. 734b.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 285; Muhammad Akram, *Sawati'u'l-anwar*, India Office, MS., ff. 304b-85b.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 104.

<sup>4</sup>*Irshadu't-talibin*, Amritsar, 1327/1909, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup>*HSI*, p. 86.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 205-6.

<sup>7</sup>Commentary on Chapter I and LXXVIII-CXIV in Delhi Persian collection of the India Office.

<sup>8</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 334a.

<sup>9</sup>*ibid*, f. 335b.



chapters he selected were also intended to explain *Wujudiyya* beliefs.

After the Mujaddid became converted to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, one of his first missions was to reform Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din because of the close associations of the Mujaddid's father with Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari's *khanqah*.<sup>1</sup> Writing to Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, the Mujaddid stated that nearness to God was not obtained by the repetition of supererogatory prayers (*nawafil*), claiming that a single obligatory prayer was superior to thousands of years spent saying other prayers such as *nawafil* and performing *zikr*, *fikr* (meditation) and *muraqaba* (contemplation) as well as fasting. A single penny spent on *zakat* was better than a mountain of gold spent on charity. The Mujaddid also remonstrated against some of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's disciples extending their *zaminbos* (kissing the ground) to *sijda* (prostration) before their *pir*. With some severity the Mujaddid described this custom as objectionable, suggesting that the disciples be prevented from becoming involved in such abominable practices. He also urged Shaikh Nizam to invite those interested to discuss works on *Fiqh*, just as assemblies of mystics debated various aspects of sufism, and added that there was no harm if the former were preferred to works on sufism.<sup>2</sup>

In another letter the Mujaddid wrote that ideas expressed by sufis on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were part of the realm of *sukr* (mystical intoxication). The truth was contained in the *Shari'a* only as defined by the 'ulama', and the *Wahdat al-Wujud* conception of the Absolute, self-manifestation (*tajalli*) and self-determination (*ta'ayyun*) were based on an initial mystical intuition only.<sup>3</sup>

The reaction of Shaikh Nizam Thaneswari to the contents of this spate of letters from the Mujaddid is not recorded but, the correspondence came to a rapid end when Jahangir banished him to Mecca in Zu'l-hijja 1014/April-May 1606 for blessing the rebel Prince, Khusrav. In his *Tuzuk* the Emperor accused the Shaikh of being a *shaiyad*<sup>4</sup> (impostor).

According to 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din was an expert on the *Shari'a*, *Tariqa*, *Haqiqa* and *Ma'rifa*. He was also an authority on the question of conversion of baser metals to gold (*kimiya*); and all the sources of gold known only to the 'world of mystery' (*ghayb*) had been revealed to him. As his expenditure greatly exceeded his resources he was assumed to be an alchemist and the Emperor Jahangir, jealous of this suspected power, exiled him to Mecca. After yet another pilgrimage he returned to India, going straight to Burhanpur. Although he was warmly welcomed by Shaikh 'Isa Sindi and his disciples, Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 29.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 30.

<sup>4</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 28.



Nizam decided to move on to Balkh.<sup>1</sup> His life there will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Seven. A few notes follow on some of his Indian disciples, all of whom were strict followers of the mystical practices of their *pir*, ignoring the *Shuhudi* philosophy of the puritanical Mujaddid.

Shaikh Janu'llah of Lahore was one of the leading *khalifas* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din and an *'alim* who was also considered an excellent teacher. Infatuated by the mystical life, he renounced his profession and became Shaikh Nizam's disciple in Thaneswar. He travelled to Mecca with his *pir* and he also accompanied him to Balkh. Ultimately he returned to Lahore where he became a prominent sufi. On 9 Jumada II 1039/24 January 1630 he died at Lahore where he was buried.<sup>2</sup>

The most notable of Shaikh Janu'llah's disciples was Shaikh 'Abdul-Khaliq of Lahore. He had a deeply ascetic temperament and was exceedingly fond of *sama'*. He died on 12 Rajab, 1059/22 July 1649 and was buried in Lahore.<sup>3</sup>

A contemporary of Shaikh 'Abdul-Khaliq in Lahore, Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif Chishti, was equally famous and had a large number of disciples. Shaikh 'Arif was a *khalifa* of Shah Kaku Chishti. The last ten days of each lunar month Shaikh 'Arif would spend in retreat, during which time he neither ate nor slept. *Sama'* gatherings had the effect of rendering him unconscious. He died at Lahore in 1064/1653-54.<sup>4</sup>

One of the well-known sufis of Lahore, and a *khalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif, was Shaikh Muhammad Siddiq Chishti Sabiri. During the day he imparted formal religious education to his students of theology while his nights were spent instructing his sufi disciples. Many Panjabi Muslims were attracted to his discipleship. During the Shaikh's lifetime it was claimed that anyone who attended his *sama'* assemblies immediately renounced the world and became mystic.<sup>5</sup>

Of the many *khalifas* of Shaikh Muhammad 'Arif, Shaikh Muhammad Salim Chishti Sabiri was singled out for a strong attack by the *'ulama'* of Lahore during the reign of Muhammad Shah. As a result he suffered considerable hardship. Ultimately the Governor of Lahore became Shaikh Muhammad Salim's disciple and managed to stem the *'ulama'*'s opposition. On 3 Zu'l-hijja 1151/14 March 1739, Shaikh Salim died and was buried in Lahore.<sup>6</sup>

A grandson of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, Shaikh Abu Sa'id Chishti Sabiri Gangohi (d. 1049/1639-40), was also a leading *khalifa*

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 633b-634a; *Sawati'u'l-anwar*, ff. 393a-95b.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 466.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, p. 476.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, I, pp. 476-77.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, I, pp. 482-83.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, I, p. 497.



of Shaikh Nizam Thanewari. In his youth Shaikh Abu Sa'id was also in the army, but he left the military profession to become a disciple of Shaikh Jalal who later transferred him to the care of Shaikh Nizam Thanewari. After Shaikh Nizam had settled in Balkh, Shaikh Abu Sa'id visited him there. After his return to Gangoh he began to supervise the work at Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus' *khanqah*. One of his *khalifas*, Shaikh Ibrahim, remained in Saidpur near Gangoh; another, Shaikh Muhammad Ibrahim, was in Saharanpur and Shaikh Khwaja was in Panipat. Shaikh Abu Sa'id's influence reached as far as the eastern U.P. through his *khalifa*, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Mubariz of Allahabad. At Gangoh, Shaikh Abu Sa'id was succeeded by his leading *khalifa*, his nephew Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, the son of Shaikh Fathu'llah Gangohi.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Mubariz Allahabadi was born in 996/1587-88 at Sadrpur, near Allahabad. After taking a formal course in religious education he became obsessed with mysticism and visited a number of contemporary sufis for instruction. From Delhi he went to the *khanqah* of Shaikh Abu Sa'id, the scene of his formal sufic training. He then visited Rudauli where he became a friend of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti. Allahabad was his next call and was to become his home for some twenty years which were spent teaching sufism. The death of Shaikh Muhibbu'llah occurred on 9 Rajab 1058/30 July 1648. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman, his teachings convinced many learned '*ulama*' who were initially hostile on the doctrine of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* of its validity.<sup>2</sup> This view, however, is over-simplified. Although Shaikh Muhibbu'llah could number among his admirers a prince (Dara-Shukoh), throughout his stay in Allahabad he encountered considerable obstacles through the enmity of the orthodox '*ulama*' and the opposition of philosophers (such as Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri) to the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The threat posed by the '*ulama*' and their supporters was a more formidable one, and a large number signed a *fatwa* saying the Shaikh was both a materialist and an atheist who should be executed for his sins. As already mentioned Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid of Jaunpur rushed to Allahabad to vehemently support Shaikh Muhibbu'llah's interpretation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He argued that like other Muslim philosophers, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah did not in fact believe that all being emanated from Unity according to its nature, but he considered the Being to be distinct from the quiddity of things and Absolute Reality.<sup>3</sup>

During the reign of Shahjahan opposition on a philosophical basis to the entire sufi movement and to ideas associated with the *Wahdat*

<sup>1</sup>*Sawati'u'l-anwar*, ff. 408b-409a; *Khazinatul-asfiya*, I, pp. 472.

<sup>2</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, f. 486b.

<sup>3</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 432a-b.



*al-Wujud* was centred around Mulla Mahmud Jaunpuri and his disciples. Philosophic and intellectual arguments were stressed, as opposed to the mystic and ecstatic ideal. Shaikh Muhibbu'llah was forced into a bitter battle to counter this tendency which had greatly influenced the pattern of thought in such a significant cultural centre as Jaunpur. Unable to counter Mulla Mahmud's opposition with logic, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah resorted to undermining rationalism, *kalam* and philosophy. 'The secrets of divine knowledge are beyond the comprehension of reason', Shaikh Muhibbu'llah argued. To him there was a great difference between a Sunni who had mastery over *kalam* and one with divine knowledge and the study of philosophy was deserving of damnation. In a series of letters to Mulla Mahmud outlining these views, he strengthened his case by quoting Ibn 'Arabi. The formal knowledge acquired by an '*alim*' was associated with an inability to understand or appreciate the work of sufis, whom Shaikh Muhibbu'llah called '*ulama*' possessed of Divine knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

Only two sufis were singled out by Shaikh Muhibbu'llah as being opposed to the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. These were Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani and Mir Saiyid Muhammad Gesu Daraz. His criticism of the former amounted to an accusation of his not having understood the real and esoteric meaning of Ibn 'Arabi's theory of *Wujud al-Mutlaq*.<sup>2</sup> The Shaikh further argued that Saiyid Gesu Daraz's *pir* (Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh of Delhi) had refused to bestow his *khirq*a on any of his disciples, thus implying that Gesu Daraz had not correctly assimilated the Chishtiyya traditions of *Wahdat al-Wujud*.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Muhibbu'llah also claimed that only scholars, ascetics and mystics who were unable to achieve true spiritual perfection were followers of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. Sufis who opposed Ibn 'Arabi he categorized as *sufi i-jahil* (ignorant sufis), '*amma ahl i-tariq* (common-place followers of the mystic path) over-emphasizing the belief in Divine transcendence and being guilty of accepting the beliefs of scholars of *kalam* in matters related to the highest form of experiential spiritual truth.<sup>4</sup>

In the meantime Shaikh Muhibbu'llah continued to write skilled commentaries on the works of Ibn 'Arabi. Prior to his move to Allahabad he had completed an Arabic commentary on the *Fusus al-Hikam*, and this was followed, in 1041/1631-32, by another commentary on the famed and controversial work, this time in Persian. He also wrote a commentary on the Qur'an from the mystical viewpoint as well as further explanatory notes on the *Hashiya tarjamat al-Qur'an*. By 13 Ramazan 1050/27

<sup>1</sup>*Makatib-i Shaikh Muhibbu'llah*, ff. 112a-15a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 32a, 173a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 32b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 115a.



December 1640, Shaikh Muhibbu'llah had produced a book entitled *Manazir-i akhassu'l-khawass*, which outlined the main teachings of Ibn 'Arabi. In 1053/1643 he also completed a treatise called *Haft-ihkam* on seven ordinances relating to the Divine realities of *Tajalli* (self-manifestation) and the *Wujud*. The *'Ibadatu'l-khawass* completed in 1053/1643 was a discussion of various aspects of the *Wahdat* from a popular viewpoint of which he later made an Arabic translation. The three pillars for a believer in *Wahdat* were outlined in the *Seh-rukni*. Among other works written by him are *Ghayatu'l-ghayat*, *Maghalit al-'amma*, *Sirru'l-khawass*, *Turqu'l-khawass*, *'Ibadat-i akhassu'l-khawass* and *Risala-i Wujud-i Mutlaq*. His *Makatib* contains a fine defence of *Wahdat* theories.<sup>1</sup> But it was Shaikh Muhibbu'llah's *Taswiyya* (Making Equal), written in Arabic, which received the most attention, excelling all his other works in popularity. In it he discussed the *Wujud-i Mutlaq* (Absolute Being) ideas of Ibn 'Arabi so successfully that they appeared to be original. To a great extent the book was concealed from the common gaze. Although reportedly Aurangzib took grave exception to the work, this was probably due to the Shaikh's intimate relations with Dara-Shukoh, since Aurangzib, a scholar of some standing, could not possibly have seen the work as anything but a restatement of the *Fusus al-Hikam*. For example, the *Taswiyya* stated:

Jabra'il (Gabriel) of Muhammad was within the person of Muhammad. Likewise Jabra'il existed within the person of each Prophet whose spiritual power he represented. When that power overwhelmed the prophet, *Wahi*<sup>2</sup> descended on him. Therefore Jabra'il was able to hold conversations with each Prophet in that Prophet's own language.<sup>3</sup>

By this time Shaikh Muhibbu'llah was dead. However the Emperor was informed that two of his disciples were close at hand in the capital. One of them, Mir Saiyid Muhammad Qanauji (an imperial servant), when asked to explain the controversial passages in the *Taswiyya*, replied that he had never been connected with Shaikh Muhibbu'llah. The other, an ascetic called Shaikh Muhammadi, was told that if he were a disciple of Shaikh Muhibbu'llah he had two choices: he could either reconcile the inflammatory statements in the *Taswiyya* with the *Shari'a* or he could burn it to ashes. This was the Shaikh's reply:

I do not deny being his disciple, nor does it behove me to show repentance for I have not yet reached that elevated mystic stage which the Shaikh had acquired and from which he talked. The

<sup>1</sup>MRM, pp. 335-36.

<sup>2</sup>Divine revelation especially that which the Prophet Muhammad received through Gabriel.

<sup>3</sup>*Mir'atu'l-khayal*, p. 325; Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi, *Sharh-i risala-i taswiyya*, Delhi Persian 1067a, India Office London.



day I reach that stage, I will write a commentary as desired. However, if His Majesty has finally decided to reduce the tract to ashes, much more fire is available in the royal kitchen than can be had in the house of the ascetics who have resigned themselves to God. Orders may be issued to burn the work along with any copies that can be acquired.<sup>1</sup>

This seems to have satisfied the Emperor and the study of the work was no longer hindered.

A number of commentaries on the *Taswiyya* followed, including one by the son of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, Khwaja Khwurd, written during the reign of Aurangzib. A somewhat more detailed commentary was produced by the eminent Chishti saint, Shah Kalimullah Jahanabadi<sup>2</sup> who added an attack on the Mujaddid for his criticism of *Wahdat al-Wujud* as being only an initial or a basic stage in the evolution of mystic progression.<sup>3</sup>

Unlike Shaikh Muhibbu'llah Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq, the son of Shaikh Fathu'llah Gangohi, was a scholar who achieved some fame on account of his perfection as a sufi *pir*. As a young man, Muhammad Sadiq was very handsome and fond of cock-fighting. Dressed lavishly, one 'Id day he went to pay his respects to his uncle, Shaikh Abu Sa'id. Disregarding his appearance, Shaikh Abu Sa'id believed that he could see the light of sainthood shining through the lad's forehead. After the boy's decision to become one of his uncle's disciples his parents were so disappointed that they attempted to hinder him from adopting this plan and they tried to exert pressure on Shaikh Abu Sa'id to persuade the boy to change his mind. Both refused to comply, Sadiq arguing that he was not prepared to see the vision of God in any form other than that of his proposed *pir*.

Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq was to become a great admirer of the Afghans, because of their courage in battle and their enthusiasm in the practice of their religion. Many of them became his disciples.<sup>4</sup>

Amongst his writings he produced a sufi treatise in which he underlined the belief that *zikr* was useful to *fikr* (meditation), the latter being an aid to *huzur* (the sense of the presence of Allah), *huzur* aiding *shuhud* (the contemplative vision of God) and *shuhud* leading to *wusul* (union with God). The perfection of a mystic depended on the level of his achievement of *wusul*.<sup>5</sup>

As the *khalifa* of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq obtained fame and his disciples spread throughout the whole of northern

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'atu'l-khayal*, pp. 325-26.

<sup>2</sup>*infra*, pp. 294-301.

<sup>3</sup>*Sharh-i risala-i taswiyya*, Delhi Persian 1067a, ff. 40a-b.

<sup>4</sup>*Sawati'u'l-anwar*, ff. 422a-25b; *Khazinat'u'l-asfiya'*, pp. 475-76.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 347b.



India. After his death in 1058/1648-49 he was succeeded by his son, Shaikh Muhammad Dawud. According to one story, the latter was summoned to Delhi during the early years of Aurangzib's reign to answer charges relating to his fascination for *sama'*. Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qawi, a well-known enemy of mystics, was sent to discuss the question of the legality of *sama'*. The Shaikh argued that according to the *Shari'a* it was legitimate only for those who were competent and merited such a privilege, and among these he included himself. His *qawwals* were promptly ordered to sing and the music was so effective that the Mulla was spellbound and even went to the extent of begging the Shaikh to make him his disciple. Shaikh Muhammad Dawud died in 1095/1683-84.<sup>1</sup>

Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali Chishti Sabiri was one of the outstanding *khalifas* of Shaikh Dawud. Due to his father's premature death his education became the responsibility of Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq and his spiritual training was finally completed under Shaikh Dawud. As a sufi, Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali believed the criticism and abuse of the worldly was the most rewarding aid for the attainment of inner regeneration and perfection. He himself experienced this situation at the hands of a neighbour who treated him with some contempt. Refusing to allow his disciples to take any action against the man the Shah accepted his constant abuse with great forbearance. At the neighbour's death, the Shah went into mourning for several days, rejecting all nourishment. To those astonished by this expression of grief, the Shah explained that the dust of worldly passions could not be removed without the help of such people and therefore the man's loss was sorely felt. Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali died in 1116/1704-5.<sup>2</sup>

A *khalifa* of Shaikh Dawud was Shaikh Sundha. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Mu'min, the father of Shaikh Sundha, was a *jagirdar* from Saharanpur who, like Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali's father, died when his children were small. From his youth Shaikh Sundha was greatly attracted to the saintly life and found the fulfilment of his dreams in the discipleship of Shaikh Dawud. In accordance with Chishti tradition he led an ascetic life and loved *sama'*. He died in 1129/1716-17.<sup>3</sup>

Saiyid Muhammad Sa'id, also known as Saiyid Miran Bhikh Chishti Sabiri, was the *khalifa* of Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali and was prominent among eighteenth century Chishtiyas in the Delhi-Saharanpur region. His passionate Hindi verses on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* theme were great favourites of contemporary sufis and were frequently sung by *qawwals*. An anecdote says that a Hindu *zamindar* named Birbar, a great enemy of Muslims whom he so intensely hated that he refused even to look at

<sup>1</sup>Ma'ariju'l-wilayat, f. 347a; Sawati'u'l-anwar, ff. 435a-36b; Khazinatu'l-asfiya', pp. 483-85.

<sup>2</sup>Khazinatu'l-asfiya', pp. 485-86.

<sup>3</sup>Sawati'u'l-anwar, ff. 445b-47a; Khazinatu'l-asfiya', pp. 487-88.



their faces, was arrested for fomenting a rebellion and was given the death sentence. *En route* to the site of execution, near the bazaar Birbar caught sight of Miran Bhikh who happened to be returning to his house. Birbar called out to the saint, begging him to save his life and promising to become a Muslim if he did so. The latter's reply implied that the condemned man would be reprieved. By the time the place of execution was reached the Governor of Sirhind had revoked the sentence. After being pardoned he was rewarded with a robe of honour. The Miran converted him to Islam and also made him his disciple. He was later to become revered under the title of Shah Pir.

Hindus and Muslims alike were permitted free access to the Miran's *langar*. One story related by a hagiographer concerns the occasion when about fourteen hundred Hindu mendicants called at the Miran's *khanqah*. Obviously his food supply could not extend to feeding such a number. By using his miraculous power, however, he managed to increase his flour, sugar and clarified butter until all were satisfied.

In 1131/1718-19 Miran Shah Bhikh died at the age of eighty-four. A tomb was erected over his grave by Muhammad Shah's vizier, Nawwab Raushanu'd-Daula at Kuhram. Ghulam Sarwar gives a list of about fifty of the Miran's *khalifas* who established Chishtiyya *khanqahs* from Saharanpur to the Panjab. Among them were *mansabdars*, who renounced the world to become sufis, as well as many other professional men.<sup>1</sup>

Of the *khalifas* of Miran Bhikh Shah Bahlul Barki Chishti, Sabiri, an Afghan, was a prolific writer. He lived at Jalandhar and also obtained training from Shah Bulaq Qadiri of Lahore. He wrote works on sufism, his main achievement being commentaries on the *Diwan* of Hafiz. As a poet he attracted a number of disciples, including a Hindu, Sabha Chand,<sup>2</sup> who wrote under the name of Nadir. He died in 1170/1756-57.

Shah Lutfu'llah of Anbala (d. 20 Zu'lq'ada 1186/12 February, 1773), another disciple of Miran Bhikh, wrote a book called the *Samratu'l-Fu'ad* on the miracles of Miran Bhikh.<sup>3</sup>

Saiyid 'Alimu'llah bin Saiyid 'Atiqu'llah Chishti of Jalandhar was taught as a child by Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali and later by Miran Bhikh. Saiyid 'Alimu'llah was born on 22 Jumada I 1109/6 December 1697. His education was so advanced that he was able to write treatises on mysticism and commentaries on such works as the *Bustan-i Sa'di* and the *Akhlaq-i Nasiri*. Moreover he was a poet who was very popular in Jalandhar and

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, pp. 489-92.

<sup>2</sup>Probably the celebrated Raja Sabha Chand, a khatti adviser of Zu'lfaqar Khan, the prime minister in Jahandar Shah's reign (1124/1712-1124/1713). Ja'far Zatalli wrote disgustingly foul poems against both Zu'lfaqar Khan and Sabha Chand. In Jumada II, 1125/July 1713 both Zu'lfaqar Khan and Sabha Chand were killed by the Emperor Farrukhsiyar (1124/1713-1131/1719).

<sup>3</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, p. 498.



its neighbourhood both as a poet and as a sufi.<sup>1</sup> He died on 16 Safar 1202/27 November 1787 and was buried in his home-town. His successor Saiyid 'Ali Shah Chishti (d. 1213/1798-99) was also of Jalandhar.<sup>2</sup>

*The Chishtiyyas of Panipat and Delhi Region*

Panipat, Delhi and the neighbouring regions also saw the rise of many important Chishtiyya sufis during the sixteenth century. One of Delhi's most significant Chishtis was Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz bin Hasan Tahir and his descendants. Born at Jaunpur in 898/1492-93 he was taken to Delhi when eight years old. Trained by Miyan Qazi Khan, he became a very strict adherent to such traditional Chishtiyya beliefs as trust in God and practices such as self-mortification. He died on 6 Jumada II 975/8 December, 1567.<sup>3</sup>

Among the Shaikh's disciples was Shaikh 'Abdu'l Ghani of Bada'un. Even as a young student when hearing mystical songs he became ecstatic, which induced in him a state of anxiety as he was unable to explain these occurrences. While still a young man he migrated to Delhi where he was given a minor position by the governor, Tatar Khan (d. 986/1578-79). Soon afterwards he decided to become a sufi under Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, and then spent several years teaching. Later he completely renounced the world and became an ascetic, living in one of Delhi's mosques. In 1003/1594-95 Mirza 'Abdu'r-Rahim Khan-i Khanan visited his *khanqah* and the Shaikh, on the Khan-i Khanan's request for counsel urged him to follow strictly the laws of the *Shari'a*. He seems to have died some years later.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Cha'in Laddah of Suhna (some twenty-five miles from Delhi in Rewari) was another *khalifa* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-'Aziz. He was a keen lecturer on the *Fusus al-Hikam* and its commentary to student sufis. Impressed with his spirituality and reputation. Akbar invited him to his court at Fathpur-Sikri and assigned him quarters near the 'Ibadat-Khana. In return for these privileges, prayers for the success of the imperial policies were requested. Occasionally the Emperor would hold private discussion with him in the night and witness his *namaz-i ma'kus*.<sup>5</sup>

In 998/1590 Shaikh Cha'in fell seriously ill. Before his death he summoned Shaikh Qutb-i 'Alam (the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l Aziz) who was then employed in Delhi's army, and handed him the *khirqah*, staff and other insignia of Shaikhdom, inherited from his father. Shaikh Qutb-i 'Alam promptly resigned his military post and settled in Delhi, where

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya*, pp. 505-6.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 508.

<sup>3</sup>*AA*, p. 282; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 327b.

<sup>4</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, p. 12.

<sup>5</sup>*HSI*, pp. 70-71, 141, 343.



Akbar assigned him the position of caretaker of the shrine containing the Prophet Muhammad's footprint.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Ishaq, another important Chishti, migrated from Multan to Delhi where he settled. He rarely talked to anyone, with the exception of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, with whom he had lengthy conversations. Customarily, he had only food enough for one day, as his slave-girl never stored anything from one day to the next. Before his death (in 989/1581) he visited the house of a neighbour who arranged a *sama'* session and the ecstasy he then experienced precipitated his death.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Usman Zinda Pir, the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir<sup>3</sup> Chishti Sabiri, was initiated into the Chishtiyya-Sabiriyya branch of Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Panipat. After Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir's death his two surviving sons had contested the succession to their father's position. Although the influential citizens of Panipat favoured Shaikh 'Usman, Sultan Ibrahim Lodi (who visited the town to arbitrate on the feud) ordered Shaikh 'Usman to assume the position of custodian of the tomb of Shaikh Jalal Panipati for the first half of the year and his brothers for the second half. The clash was understandable if it is borne in mind that the tomb yielded a highly lucrative income. Dissatisfied with the Sultan's ruling the two aspiring leaders and their followers fought a pitched battle, in order to settle their respective rights. Shaikh 'Usman emerged the victor.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Usman's son, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, was first educated by his father and later became his successor. His elder brother, Kamal, was an ecstatic who, although urged by the locals of Panipat to succeed to the leadership of his father's *khanqah*, rejected the offer in favour of his younger brother.<sup>5</sup>

The most prominent Chishtiyya to contribute to the classical musical traditions established by Amir Khusraw of Delhi was Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din bin 'Ala'u'd-Din (d. 1038/1628) from Barnawa in Jhanjhana, near Delhi. One of his ancestors, Shaikh Badru'd-Din bin Sharafu'd-Din

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 110-11; Although Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir was impressed with Shaikh Cha'in, he resented his associations with Akbar. Both in the second and third volumes he accused the Shaikh of selling his *namaz-i ma'kus* cheaply. According to Mulla Bada'uni, the Shaikh's prophesy that a son would be born to one of Akbar's queens fell rather flat and a daughter was born. This somewhat discredited the Shaikh, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, II, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 286; *Khazinatu'l-asfiya*, pp. 441-42.

<sup>3</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir's father Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Panipati and the grandfather of Shaikh Shibli were also prominent sufis of Panipat. Sultan Sikandar Lodi and his prime minister Miyan Bhuwa were deeply impressed with the miraculous power of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Kabir and had awarded the Shaikh several villages from Karnal to Jhanjhana. Ilah-diya, *Siyaru'l-aqtab*, Lucknow, 1881, pp. 226-29.

<sup>4</sup>*Siyaru'l-aqtab*, pp. 229-31.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 231-32.



Ansari (d. 788/1386) had settled in Delhi and founded a school near the Minara-i Shamsi (Qutb-Minar). Later he became the disciple of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud Chragh-i Dihli and migrated to Barnawa, a village near Delhi surrounded by jungle and other small villages. The cultivators living close by were Ranghar Rajputs, who soon began calling the Shaikh 'Atit Turk Jogi' (a wandering Turk yogi). Many of the local Hindus became attracted to the Shaikh's asceticism and would turn to him for help with their problems.

Shaikh Badru'd-Din's successor, Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din, migrated to Shaikhupura Rapri, in the Mainpuri district east of Delhi. Although the invasion of Timur devastated Barnawa, the Shaikh managed to escape it. In Zu'l-hijja 855/January 1452 Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din died aged ninety and was succeeded by his son, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din. One of his other sons, Shaikh Pir Buddhan, became the *pir* of Sultan Husain Shah Sharqi (862/1458-883/1479) of Jaunpur. Shaikh Pir Buddhan was a wrestler, an archer and above all else, a great patron of musicians. The *qaul*<sup>1</sup> and *tarana*<sup>2</sup> melodies invented by Amir Khusraw were his favourites. Hindu musicians from as far as the Deccan would call on him, finding in him a great connoisseur and admirer of classical Indian music. The Shaikh's fame soon turned Rapri into an important centre for both Persian and Indian music. The Shaikh was successful in persuading a group of musicians (known as Chokh) from the Deccan to settle in Rapri, some of whom later even embraced Islam. In Sultan Sikandar Lodi's reign (894/1489-923/1517) the peaceful life of Shaikh Pir Buddhan was disturbed by the Afghan invasion of the reign. Although the Shaikh wished to migrate to Herat, an Afghan noble of Sultan Sikandar Lodi, Idris Jalwani, brought the Shaikh and his family back to Barnawa where they finally settled.

In 903/1497-98 Shaikh Pir Buddhan died and was succeeded by his son, Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sani (the Second). Sultan Sikandar arranged for the income from twenty-seven villages to go towards the latter's expenses. Later the Shaikh married the daughter of a local Rawat (Hindu chief). Shaikh Badru'd-Din was also an enthusiastic patron of classical Indian music, which, together with compositions of Amir Khusraw, proved popular attraction at his *sama*<sup>4</sup> gatherings.

On 16 Zu'l-hijja 949/23 March 1543 Shaikh Badru'd-Din died and was succeeded by Shaikh Faridu'd-Din bin Shaikh Bayazid bin Shaikh Pir Buddhan. As well as inheriting a passion for music, the Shaikh developed a love for wrestling, archery and hunting, and was supposed to have given a highly-trained leopard as a gift to the Emperor Akbar. He also

<sup>1</sup>The classical form of the sufi vocal music called *Qawwali*.

<sup>2</sup>*Tarana*, similar to the south-Indian *tillana*, is sung in the fast tempo. N. Jairazbhoy, 'Music', A.L. Basham ed., *A Cultural History of India*, Oxford, 1975, p. 233.



became known for his hospitality, and gave lavish feasts in celebration of the various death anniversaries of outstanding *pirs*.

Shaikh Faridu'd-Din founded a village called Shaikhupura near Barnawa where he built a *jama'at-khana*, a *khanqah* and a mosque. Artisans and peasants from surrounding villages, attracted by what they had heard of the Shaikh's personality moved to the new village. A group of Hindu Jats who were habitual thieves moved there and abandoned crime for agriculture. The village also developed into a rendezvous for homeless Afghans.

Shaikh Zakariya and Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din (two descendants of Baba Farid), Shaikh Gada'i<sup>1</sup> Kamboh and other prominent '*alims* and sufis from Delhi, were all constant visitors to Shaikh Faridu'd-Din's *khanqah* and were lavishly entertained. Akbar made generous additions to the number of villages already in the Shaikh's possession. In his old age Shaikh Faridu'd-Din made his grandson, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din bin Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din, his successor and retired to Mecca where he died on 5 Jumada I 987/30 June 1579.<sup>2</sup>

Like his grandfather Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was an accomplished archer and an enthusiastic hunter. Later he replaced his bow for a matchlock and became an expert marksman. After the death of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din, he gave up hunting so as to dedicate the rest of his life to travel and the study of music. He moved freely between the cities of Delhi, Hansi, Hisar, Sirhind, Lahore, Ajodhan and the provinces of Gujarat, Cambay, the Deccan, Jaunpur, Bihar and Bengal. A group of expert musicians, both singers and players would generally accompany him and were always on hand to accept whatever *futuh* (gifts) he received. On these trips the Shaikh was always a welcome guest at the various Chishtiyya and Shattariyya *khanqahs*. In Gujarat, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din heard Shaikh 'Ali lecture on his treatise on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the *Jawahir asrar-i Allah*, written in the local Gujarati dialect; he also impressed the Shaikh with his Hindi verse.

Eminent Hindu and Muslim musicians continually called on Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din at Shaikhupura, among them Na'ik Harkaran, Na'ik Harnath, Na'ik Chirju, Na'ik Sahun Ilahtad Rababi (a performer on the rebeck), Sudhar Rababi, Bazu Rababi, Bhagwan Rababi, Parbin Khan Binkar (harpist) and Karbin Khan. The famous singer and musician, Nilkanth, often discussed intricate aspects of music with the Shaikh and was greatly impressed with his talent. Although the Shaikh only heard one musical recital by the celebrated Tansen, the latter considered the Shaikh to be a prominent connoisseur of music. He ordered his son to

<sup>1</sup>RIM, pp. 53-54, 83, 168, 233, 288; HSI, p. 289.

<sup>2</sup>Urdu summary from 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad Chishti Barnawi's *Chishtiyya-i bihishtiyya* or *Firdausya-i qudsiya* by Mahmud Shirani, *Oriental College Magazine*, August, 1927, pp. 41-58.



serve the Shaikh as a servant and then proceeded to send him a gift of twenty-five *ashrafis* (gold coins) annually. A group of musicians from the Deccan, known as the Gandharp, also called on the Shaikh in order to play for him. This was considered something of an honour as these people lived in the forest in order to keep their music unpolluted by outside influences. Shaikh Bichchu and his disciples, Makhu and Hamza of Patna, were also among Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's many admirers.

The Shaikh composed his own *jikris* (zikrs)<sup>1</sup> in praise of the fourth Caliph 'Ali and the spiritual ancestors of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, in which he combined the style of Amir Khusraw with the old classical Indian tunes. Music he saw as a divine secret to be hidden from the ignorant.<sup>2</sup> Although he was an enthusiastic lecturer on the innovations of Amir Khusraw, the Shaikh considered the *dhurpad*<sup>3</sup> of Raja Man Singh of Gwalior (1486-1516) to be a retrograde step in the history of Indian music, and ultimately harmful to its classical forms. He invented new tunes for the *Bishunpads*<sup>4</sup> in keeping with the verses of Kabir and Surdas, but rejected the more common *Bishunpad* tunes of Hindu Bairagis and urged his musicians to do likewise. In spite of this local Vaishnavites and Bairagis frequently visited him to recite their verses of *Kabiris* (verses of Kabir).

Among Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's many friends were Khan-i Khanan Abdu'r-Rahim and Shaikh Farid Bukhari. Perhaps the closest of his relationships was with a prominent Bairagi, Das Ghanun, who was the *guru* of a large number of Rajput rajas and other leading Hindus. During a conversation with Das, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din mentioned that the Hindu taboos against commensalism of Hindus and Muslims merely helped to widen the existing gap between the two communities. On a later occasion when the Shaikh and Das were in the company of some prominent Hindus, in order to show his goodwill towards his Muslim friend, Das Ghanun seized a *samosa* (meant pie) from a saucepan of *samosas* offered to the Shaikh by a Muslim devotee and began to munch it. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din grabbed the *samosa* and threw it away. The incensed Das Ghanun explained that he had purposely wished to make such a stand in the company of his fellow Hindus, because of the Shaikh's remark. Quietly Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din told his friend that he had merely been teasing him, that he had never doubted his sincerity and had not wished to test it. Moreover eating and drinking between communities were affections for externalists, those who believed in the Unity of Being were one. When dying, Das Ghanun's farewell message to the Shaikh was just one line;

<sup>1</sup>Musical tune to replace *ziker*.

<sup>2</sup>*Oriental College Magazine*, May, 1927, pp. 8-24; November, 1927, pp. 16-17.

<sup>3</sup>Form of vocal music performed in slow or medium tempo.

<sup>4</sup>A special tune for singing Vaishnavite songs.



*Das Ghanun jiun jal tirangan jal men jal so sama'i*

(Das Ghanun is like an ocean wave which rises from the ocean, then merges back into it).

When commissioning instruments to be made for him, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din, accompanied by his carpenters, would personally choose the wood from local forests. The finished products would be made to his own specifications and under his supervision. Of all his inventions the most interesting was a musical instrument in the shape of an inkwell (*qalamdan*) which opened to reveal a series of strings and pegs. This instrument, which its maker called a *saz-khayal*<sup>1</sup> soon became popular. One of the Shaikh's favourite musicians, a man called Laun was known to have played it before the Emperor Jahangir while the musician Nilkanth and Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din looked on. Apparently Nilkanth was so overcome by the recital that he expressed his appreciation by falling at the Shaikh's feet. Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was also the inventor of a number of other musical instruments.

Another of the Shaikh's talents was writing verses in Hindi and composing accompaniments. These were used by Hindus and Muslims alike to invoke the favour of deceased sufis and to cure diseases. His biographer and disciple, Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din Muhammad Chishti Barnawi, quoted a number of these verses when describing his *pir's* miracles.

With Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's death on 17 Rabi' II 1038/14 Dec. 1628, an important chapter in the inventive genius associated with classical music in the genre of Amir Khusraw was closed.<sup>2</sup> Later musicians began resorting to more popular tunes in their attempts to soothe their uncultivated patrons.

### *Shaikh Salim Chishti and his disciples*

The rise of Fathpur-Sikri on the ridge of the Sikri hills as a great sufic centre in northern India and its establishment as the new Mughal capital was a direct result of the spiritual eminence of Shaikh Salim bin Baha'u'd-Din Chishti. Shaikh Salim's ancestors were descendants of Baba Farid. Before migrating to Delhi, his father spent some years in Ludhiana. Shaikh Salim was born in 884/1479-80.<sup>3</sup> In the reign of Bahlul Lodi (855/1451-894/1489) Shaikh Salim's parents migrated to Sikri. After his parents died his upbringing and education fell to his brother, Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>Instrument to play *khayal* or a form of vocal music with not many words.

<sup>2</sup>*Oriental College Magazine*, August, 1927, pp. 41-58; 1929, pp. 81-111.

<sup>3</sup>Ali Asghar, *Jawahir-i Faridi*, Lahore, 1301/1884, p. 333. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi Shaikh Salim was born in 897/1491-92 (*AA*, p. 283).

*Akhbaru't-asfiya'* follows the *Akhbaru'l-akhyar* (Aligarh University MS., f. 126a) but the date based on the family tradition which the *Jawahir-i Faridi* gives has been preferred.



Musa. Later he was initiated as a Chishti by Diwan Shaikh Ibrahim (Sani Farid-o Salis Farid), a descendant of Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sulaiman a son of Baba Farid).<sup>1</sup>

In 931/1524-25 Shaikh Salim began a pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>2</sup> He remained abroad for thirteen years, visiting Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran, taking care to reach Mecca in time to perform the annual pilgrimage. Returning to Sikri in 944/1537-38 he again began living on the uninhabited ridge later to become the site of the Mughal capital. His fame as a *hajji*, in conjunction with his intense self-mortification and meditation, resulted in Sikri becoming a centre for sufis, *'alims* and the poor. In Sikri, the Shaikh married a number of times and had a large family.

Islam Shah Sur (952/1545-960/1552) appointed two Imams to lead his prayers one of them being Shaikh Salim Chishti who it would seem only performed this function on his visits to Delhi.

In 962/1554-55 Shaikh Salim made another *hajj* and again was abroad for some years. On this trip he was accompanied by a number of disciples and friends (including the eminent Shaikh Ya'qub Sarfi from Kashmir), and by one of his wives. In 971/1563-64 he again returned to the Sikri ridge, this time constructing a *khanqah* there. Again he attracted large crowds, including members of the nobility, and the celebrated Qadiri sufi, Shaikh Aman of Panipat. During one visit the latter asked Shaikh Salim whether he had attained his goal through induction or revelation. The reply was that this method was a 'heart-to-heart' one, that is, that God mysteriously revealed Himself to his heart, thus drawing him nearer to Himself. The young Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir took the opportunity to exhibit his knowledge of Arabic and wrote the Shaikh a letter in that language. Shaikh A'zam from Bada'un, who was both the son-in-law and cousin of Shaikh Salim, introduced Mulla Bad'uni to the Shaikh. Although a mutual friendship developed, through the medium of the *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh* the Mulla did not spare the aging Shaikh from ridicule. However he did refer to the Shaikh's austerity, telling how even in the cold, wintry air of the highlands of Fathpur-Sikri the Shaikh wore nothing above his waist but a thin cotton shirt with a muslim garment over it and insisted on taking bath twice daily.<sup>3</sup> Besides such distinguished visitors, Shaikh Salim was also surrounded by the simple stone-cutters who quarried stone for the Agra fort. They paid their homage to the Shaikh by building a small mosque around the original cell where the Shaikh performed *chillas*.

After the birth on 30 August 1569 of Prince Salim Akbar's long-awaited son and heir, believed to be the result of Shaikh Salim's prayers, the

<sup>1</sup>*Jawahir-i Faridi*, p. 336. Possibly Guru Nanak called on this Farid-i Sani who was also known by many other titles such as Shaikh Barham and Shah Ibrahim.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, p. 283.

<sup>3</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 11-14.



Emperor's gratitude knew no bound. In the exuberance of the moment he ordered a satellite town to connect with Agra to be built on the hills of Sikri. Later called Fathpur-Sikri, this town was to become a lasting monument to the architectural genius of India. Under Shaikh Salim Chishti's personal supervision a splendid mosque and *khanqah* were built into a complex. After his death on 29 Ramazan 979/14 February 1572, he was buried in the beautiful tomb which was erected on the site of his new cell.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Shaikh's numerous sons and grandsons continued in service to Akbar and Jahangir and were rewarded for their loyalty with high *mansabs*.

Shaikh Salim Chishti's disciples included Shaikh Husain Ahmad Chishti (d. 996/1587-88), a former disciple of Shaikh Aman Panipati, who was an excellent calligrapher. His signed inscriptions on the base of the façade of the Buland Darwaza are superb and merited him a distinguished place in the history of Arabic calligraphy in India.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Hajji Husain Chishti died in 1000/1591-92 and was buried to the south-west of the tomb now known as Islam Khan's tomb.<sup>3</sup> Of the other disciples of Shaikh Salim, Shaikh Taha Chishti was known to have accompanied his master on his travels to Mecca and was appointed his *khalifa* at Ahmadabad. When Akbar was at Fathpur-Sikri in 1573 the defeated Sultan Muzaffar of Gujarat rebelled against him for the second time. Reportedly the Sultan visited the Shaikh and asked him to dress him in his armour as sign that he blessed him. The Shaikh replied that God had assigned Gujarat to Akbar and therefore he had no power to interfere. The Sultan threatened to have the mystic killed before Akbar arrived, but finally agreed to wait a week before ordering his execution. By the time the seven days had expired the war was over, the Sultan himself was dead and Gujarat had once more been added to the Mughal Empire.<sup>4</sup> Akbar marched from Fathpur on 23 August 1573 and reached Ahmadabad, some 600 miles away, eleven days later, killing Muzaffar on 2 September 1573.

Shaikh Piyara Chishti was one of Shaikh Salim's favourite disciples. He was honoured by the Shaikh when he was given the task of praying for the safety of Prince Salim. Shaikh Piyara became well-known in

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 284. For the description of Shaikh Salim's tomb, mosque, *khanqah* and other Fathpur-Sikri monuments see S.A.A. Rizvi and V.J.A. Flynn, *Fathpur-Sikri*, Bombay, 1975, and a shorter study by S.A.A. Rizvi published by Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1972.

<sup>2</sup>AA, p. 243; *Fathpur-Sikri*, p. 86, plate XXXIII, detail of the right hand side of the Buland Darwaza showing the signature of Shaikh Husain Ahmad Chishti. Shaikh Husain's grave with his name and the date of death marked on it is to the east, towards the Badshahi Darwaza. This side of the courtyard is known as *Yaran Chabutra*.

<sup>3</sup>*Fathpur-Sikri*, p. 81; *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 310b-11a; *Khazinatul-asfiya*, pp. 444-45.



Bengal. He died in 986/1578-79 while *en route* to the Deccan and was buried on the banks of the Narbada.<sup>1</sup>

Saiyid Muzammil, the son of Hajji 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, seems to have entered Shaikh Salim's discipleship after his *pir's* return from his first pilgrimage tour. On his *pir's* instructions, he served for a short period in the army of Sher Shah Sur during his Gwalior campaign.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Wali, son of Shaikh Yusuf Chishti, a leading disciple of Shaikh Salim Chishti, aroused the envy of the Shaikh's senior disciples by the attention shown to him by the Shaikh from the day of his very first visit.<sup>3</sup>

One of Shaikh Salim's *khalifas*, Shaikh Saiyid Jeo, was a member of the Mughal nobility of Delhi. At a chance meeting with a disciple of the Shaikh he mentioned that he was seeking a perfect *pir* who could help him achieve some type of ecstatic state with great rapidity. He was advised to call on the Shaikh at Fathpur-Sikri. Although initially rebuffed, Saiyid Jeo finally managed to see the great Chishti and immediately fell into a swoon, remaining in this state for three days. Later he became a disciple and *khalifa* of Shaikh Salim and settled in Delhi. He died in 1015/1606-7.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Fathu'llah Tarin Sambhali was another disciple and *khalifa* of the great Chishti. He often meditated on the ridge of Fathpur-Sikri. Although illiterate, he miraculously managed to read enough to satisfy any criticism by the 'ulama'. His prayers were believed to have brought rain to the dry areas around Fathpur-Sikri.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Gwalior and Narnaul*

In the sixteenth century the work of Khwaja Khanu turned Gwalior into an important Chishtiyya centre. Khwaja Khanu was the disciple of Khwaja Husain Nagauri and had also obtained a *khirqa* from Shaikh Isma'il, the son of Shaikh Husain Sarmast of Chanderi. It has been stated that Khanu also received instruction directly from the spirit of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. Surviving well into old age, he died around 940/1533-34.<sup>6</sup>

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din of Narnaul, a *khalifa* of Khwaja Khanu, was teacher of Chishti ideals for at least forty years. Each year he would visit

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, p. 12; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 310a-b; *Khazinatul-asfiya'*, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup>*Ma'arijul-wilayat*, ff. 311a-b. After defeating Humayun on 10 Muharram, 947/17 May, 1540, Sher Shah sent his general Shuja'at Khan against Gwalior but his main intention was to terrorize Mallu Khan (Qadir Shah), the ruler of Malwa. Shaikh Salim Chishti's friendship with Sher Shah enabled him to get the post of Imam under his son, Islam Shah.

<sup>3</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 309b; *Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 447.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 309b-10a; *Khazinatul-asfiya'*, I, p. 451.

<sup>5</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 12; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 308b-9a.

<sup>6</sup>AA, p. 230; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 300b.



the tombs of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki and Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, at the sight of which he would be reduced to a state of ecstasy. He died in 997/1588-89.<sup>1</sup> Other disciples of Shaikh Khanu and Shaikh Nizam Narnauli from Gwalior, Chanderi and Bayana to Agra became prominent mystics.

Shaikh Ikhtiyaru'd-Din Marwani was the most outstanding of Shaikh Nizam's disciples. For many years he meditated at the tomb of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, until finally he had a vision of the saint who ordered him to seek initiation from Shaikh Nizam. Immediately going to the Shaikh's house, he found him sitting on an Indian string bed lost in meditation. Not impressed with Shaikh Nizam, he began to leave but the Shaikh raised his head and asked why he was rejecting the orders of the Khwaja. After becoming his disciple and successor in Kalpi, Shaikh Ikhtiyaru'd-Din became a popular sufi *pir*. He died in 1011/1602-3.<sup>2</sup>

### *Burhanpur*

It was Burhanpur which, from the end of the fourteenth to the seventeenth century; had the distinction of being both a Chishtiyya and Shattariyya centre. This was basically due to the many types of influence exercised by the *pirs* of these orders, the leading figure among whom was Shaikh 'Azizu'llah Mutwakkil (Trusting in God). Like a number of other highly ascetic sufis not a morsel of food remained in his house at night; his scrupulousness even extended to water so that only the barest minimum was retained for ablutions. Although he rejected visits from the wealthy, if they persisted they were given the lowliest position in the house where the slippers were left outside his room. On one occasion a wealthy visitor found the Shaikh sitting alone in total darkness with no oil for his lamp. His subsequent gift of that commodity to the Shaikh's son was promptly given to a neighbour.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh 'Azizu'llah's disciple, Shah Baha'u'd-Din, was a descendant of Maulana Ahmad of the Madyanniya order. Better known by his Hindi *nom de plume*, Bajan, he had travelled extensively throughout the Islamic world. He composed verses in both Persian and Hindi. On 14 Zu'lq'a'da 912/28 March 1507<sup>4</sup> he died and was succeeded by his son, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hakim. Like his father he too wrote Hindi poetry and ardently participated in *sama*'. He died on 27 Ramazan 992/1 October 1584.

In Burhanpur Shaikh Yusuf's son, Shaikh Nizamud-Din Bhikari, rose to prominence as a sufi. At the suggestion of Shah Nu'man of Asir he

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, pp. 26-27; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 300b.

<sup>2</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 301a.

<sup>3</sup>*AA*, p. 279; *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 307a-b.

<sup>4</sup>*Ahwal Hazrat Khwaja Burhanu'd-Din* (Saints of Burhanpur). Leningrad Oriental Institute MS., ff. 39a-45b.



went to Mandu fort to receive instruction from Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din, a descendant of Baba Farid. From him he obtained the title of Shaikh Bhikari (Beggar). He then visited Pak-Pattan (Ajodhan) performing meditation and ascetic exercises under Shaikh Muhammad, the head of Baba Farid's *khanqah*. From Pak-Pattan he returned to Asir and from there made two pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina, one by sea and the other by the arduous land route.

The Shaikh was known to fast continuously throughout the day while his nights were occupied in prayer. After spending many years wandering like a *qalandar*, at Shah Nu'man's suggestion he settled in Burhanpur where he established his own *khanqah*. Before his death Shah Nu'man transferred his disciples to the care of Shaikh Bhikari so that they could still complete their sufi training. Sultan 'Ali 'Adil Shah I (1538-1580) of Bijapur was an enthusiastic devotee of Shaikh Bhikari. On 12 Rabi' I 970/1 November 1562 the Shaikh died, leaving many important *khalifas* to follow him as missionaries in the Chishti cause.<sup>1</sup>

One of Shaikh Bhikari's *khalifas*, Shah Mansur, was a *majzub* (ecstatic). The son of Malik Jalal, his grandfather was a former Prime Minister of 'Ali 'Adil Shah. After receiving the usual religious and literary education his ecstatic love of the sufi life prompted him to become the disciple of the Shaikh Bhikari. Serving his *pir* with an incredible degree of humility he was soon a leading sufi. On one occasion he was in such a deep state of Shaikh Bhikari. When in such ecstatic states he would compose verses Burhanpur bazaar naked. Apparently Sultan Bahadur of Gujarat (1526-37) discovered Shah Mansur roaming in the bazaar of Burhanpur. The ruler tried to converse with him but the Shah ran towards the tomb of Shaikh Bhikari. When in such ecstatic states he would compose verses in Persian and a number of local dialects.<sup>2</sup>

The reputation of the Chishtiyya centre in Burhanpur was also enhanced by Shaikh Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah, whose ancestors came from Jaunpur, although he himself was born in Gujarat around 952/1545-46. He obtained his spiritual education from Shaikh Safi Gujarati before going to Mecca where he studied under Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi. After returning to Ahmadabad he obtained training in theology under Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din. In the reign of Miran Muhammad II, son of Mubarak Shah II (974/1566-984/1576), the Faruqi Sultan of Khandesh, Shaikh Muhammad moved to Asirgarh before finally settling at Burhanpur. A strict adherent to the *Shari'a* he was very critical of the Shattariyya order.

While in an ecstatic condition he would leave Burhanpur on pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, but if he failed to get a boat he would reluctantly

<sup>1</sup> *Ahwal Hazrat Khwaja Burhanu'd-Din*, pp. 45b-54a.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, pp. 63a-73b.



return home. However he managed to visit Mecca and Medina several times in his life. Each year he divided his accrued *futuh* into three, giving one to his family, the other to the dervishes of his *khanqah* and the third to the needy of Medina.<sup>1</sup> Shaikh Muhammad enjoyed an enviable position commanding the respect of both sufis and 'alims in India and Hijaz. Famous for his ardent devotion to the *Shari'a* he strongly disapproved of the activities of his Shattariyya colleague in Burhanpur, Shaikh 'Isa Sindi, who uninhibitedly lectured on the *Fusus al-Hikam*, the *Futuh al-Makkiyya* and the *Insan al-Kamil*. Nevertheless, Shaikh Muhammad was himself a firm follower of Ibn 'Arabi, and worked at discouraging what he saw as accretions and misinterpretations in Ibn 'Arabi's philosophy by followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. In a short work, *al-Tuhfa al-mursala ila ruh al-Nabi*, written in Arabic, Shaikh Muhammad outlined the main points of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, which he spiritedly defended. Later he also wrote a Persian commentary on it. He did this by assembling various verses from the Qur'an and also various *Hadis* of the Prophet Muhammad. These are some Qur'anic verses quoted in the *Tuhfa*.

Unto Allah belong the East and the West, and withersoever ye turn, there is Allah's countenance Lo ! Allah is All-Embracing, All-Knowing.<sup>2</sup>

We are nearer to Him than His jugular vein.<sup>3</sup>

He is with you wheresoever ye may be.<sup>4</sup>

And We are nearer unto Him than ye are, but ye see not.<sup>5</sup>

Lo ! those who swear allegiance unto thee (Muhammad), swear allegiance only unto Allah. The Hand of Allah is above their hands.<sup>6</sup>

He is the First and the Last, and the Outward and the Inward; and He is Knower of all things.<sup>7</sup>

And (also) in yourselves. Can ye then not see?<sup>8</sup>

And when My servants question thee concerning Me, then surely I am nigh.<sup>9</sup>

...And thou (Muhammad) threwest not when thou didst throw but Allah threw.<sup>10</sup>

...Lo ! Is not He surrounding all things ?<sup>11</sup>

Like many other followers of Ibn 'Arabi, the Shaikh began the *Tuhfa* by identifying Reality with Being and asserting that, in the stage of non-determination (*la-ta'ayyun*) Being was the Absolute *per se*. The Shaikh maintained that in his Essence God was unknowable and inconceivable and believed that attempts to know Him in this aspect were wasted. In the stage of His first determination (*ta'ayyun*), the Absolute is known as *Wahda* and the *Haqiqat al-Muhammadiyya* (Reality of Muhammad).

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, f. 321b; *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 362b.

<sup>2</sup>Qur'an, II, 115.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, L. 16.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, LVII, 4.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, LVI, 85.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, XLVIII, 10.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, LVII, 3.

<sup>8</sup>*ibid*, LI, 21.

<sup>9</sup>*ibid*, II, 186.

<sup>10</sup>*ibid*, VIII, 17.

<sup>11</sup>*ibid*, XLI, 54.



The third stage is the *Wahidiyya* and the Reality of the Perfect Man. The fourth stage is the '*alam al-arwah* (realm of spirits), the fifth stage the '*alam al-misal*, and the sixth is the '*alam al-ajsam* (the realm of bodies). The seventh stage is the final stage in the self-manifestation of Being. One of Shaikh Muhammad's main aims was to remind sufis (and their enemies) that Divine self-manifestation and determination did not imply a belief in the unification of God (*itihad*) or His descent (*hulul*) with existence, Being as the Primal One not allowing any form of plurality. Therefore sufis seeking God should first obey the Prophet Muhammad (in both word and deed, inwardly and outwardly) and then move on to contemplation of the Unity of Being.

On 2 Ramazan 1029/1 August 1620 Shaikh Muhammad bin Fazlu'llah died, deeply mourned by the people of Burhanpur.<sup>1</sup> His disciple and *khalifa*, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghafur Burhanpuri, was equally enthusiastic in his propagation of, and adherence to, the *Shari'a*, as well as in the suppression of sinful innovations (*bid'a*). An ascetic, he was also an exponent of true charity to others. In his writing he developed a lucid style for expressing subtle thoughts on mysticism, and he produced a number of sufi treatises. He also composed a Persian commentary on the *Tuhfa* and in his conclusion attempted to reconcile the beliefs of theologians and mystics. Believing there was no real conflict between the '*ulama*' and the sufis regarding the Creator and the universe, he stated that the '*ulama*' considered God to be the creator of the universe, while sufis asserted there was an association between Being and the universe without the two being united. According to the '*ulama*', there was no association between God and the universe, and they therefore condemned those who described such an association as infidels. The Shaikh told how sufis believed that the universe, both in small sections and in its entirety, had a special association with God. According to them, God and the universe (as the manifestation of Being) always remained one with the other, but God as an Omnipotent Being was at the same time transcendent. A highly developed faith harmonized the association and dissociation between God and man. Moreover eminent sufis who had full control over their mystical intuition, understood the unity between God and the universe by perceiving the latter as an exceedingly limited entity. Those who were so overpowered by their mystic intuition that they could not perceive that the universe was a limited entity were ecstasies with diseased mentalities. Yet those who intentionally obliterated differences between God and the universe were heretics and unbelievers.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 362b-66a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 366a-69b.



*The Jaunpur and Lucknow Regions*

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Jaunpur and the regions between Lucknow and Allahabad continued to enjoy pre-eminence as Chishtiyya centres. Shaikh Ma'ruf Jaunpuri and his *pir*, Maulana Ilahbad (a scholar famous for his commentaries on the works of *Fiqh*), were amongst prominent Chishtiyya sufis who were members of the *silsila* of Raji Hamid Shah of Manikpur.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, a *khalifa* of Shaikh Ma'ruf, was born in the last decade of the ninth/fifteenth century. In his youth he was an '*alim*', but he later adopted the life of a sufi. His *pir* appointed him his *khalifa* in Amethi in the Lucknow district. The Shaikh led a retired life in the village of Amethi, occasionally visiting surrounding towns such as Gopamau, Khairabad<sup>2</sup> and Fathpur to see the local sufis.

The Shaikh disapproved of sufi novices studying the *Fusus al-Hikam*, preferring such classics on sufism as the *Ihya' al-'uham* of Ghazali, the '*Awarif al-ma'arif*' of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi, the *Risala al-Makkiyya* of Shaikh Imam Qutbu'd-Din 'Abdu'llah and the *Adab al-muridin* of Shaikh Abu'n-Najib as Suhrawardi. He himself lectured mainly on ideas contained in the '*Awarif al-ma'arif*' and often quoted at some length verses of the famous sufi poet, Khwaja Hafiz Shirazi. Professing to believe the *Hadis* of the Prophet Muhammad that salt could cure all the seventy diseases of Perso-Indian medical lore (obviously excluding death), he always carried salt on his person, consuming it even when lecturing.

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din believed that the famous work on Arabic grammar, the *Kafiya fi'n-nahw*, was objectionable as a student text on the grounds that its author, Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din (d. 646/1248), had omitted in his preface to offer the traditional praise to God, and to beg for blessings for the Prophet Muhammad, his descendants and companions. Contrary to the Indian custom of performing prayers barefooted he recited his prayers with his shoes on, as he believed the Prophet Muhammad had done likewise.

Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Bada'uni related an interesting incident which he believed illustrated the Shaikh's supernatural powers. Travelling between Lucknow and Amethi, Bada'uni came across some police officers who had arrested a man disguised as a beggar on the charge of highway robbery, and had witnessed the man escaping from custody. Later, when the Mulla and his companions arrived at the house of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, a beggar also called. To the amazement of the Mulla and others, he

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 265-66; AA, p. 284.

<sup>2</sup>At Khairabad he enjoyed the company of Shaikhu'l-Hidaya whose religious routine included regular meetings where ecstatic songs and dances were performed *Muntakh-abu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 27.



was refused hospitality. Intuitively, the Shaikh, who had not seen the arrest on the highway, had recognized the beggar as the thief.

Reluctant to initiate disciples Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din made exceptions however. A boy called Hatim, whom he had discovered in the *khanqah* of Qazi Mubarak of Gopamau was one of them. He cared for the youth providing him with books, clothes and shoes. He grew up to be a prominent sufi and Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din bestowed on him the title of Shaikh, an honour he granted to him alone. After Shaikh Hatim's death from an attack of asthma, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din missed his company, lamenting that he had no one with whom to talk.

In 979/1571-2 Shaikh Nizam died aged more than eighty.<sup>1</sup> His successor was his son, Miyan Shaikh Muhammad. One of the latter's disciples was Shaikh Mustafa 'Abdu'l-Hamid 'Usman who lived in the village of Barauna in Jaunpur where he was very well-known. In his old age Shaikh Mustafa migrated to Purniya in Bengal where he died. His son, Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid, lived in Jaunpur and was initiated as a Chishti by his father. Later he also became a Qadiri, as the Qadiriyya order around Jaunpur had become increasingly popular through the efforts of the descendants of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid, whose life has been discussed in Chapter two.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Sufi was also a disciple of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din of Amethi. After the death of his *pir*, Shaikh Sufi moved to Gujarat and for several years remained there studying the *Fusus al-Hikam* and the *Futuhāt al-Makkiyya* under Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati. Shaikh Sufi wrote a commentary on the *Fusus al-Hikam* and delivered brilliant lectures on the technical terms used by Ibn 'Arabi in discussing the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. The leading figure among the disciples of Shaikh Sufi was Shaikh Halim Ibrahimabadi, who mastered the *Fusus al-Hikam* under his *pir*. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti was taught by Shaikh Halim and also knew Shaikh Sufi.

The Emperor Jahangir was highly impressed by the scholarship of Shaikh Sufi, believing him to be an expert in history, biographical literature and sufic works, and appointed the Shaikh Prince Khurram's tutor. In the morning the Shaikh would instruct the Prince in history from such works as the *Tabaqat-i Nasiri*, and in the evening would tutor him in mysticism and theology. He always began his sufi lessons with a letter from the *Maktubat* by Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari and his comments on the contents instructed his pupil in the technical terms of sufism and Qur'anic exegesis.<sup>3</sup>

It would seem that in the beginning of Jahangir's reign, the Mujaddid

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, pp. 15-24; *AA*, pp. 284-85.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, pp. 98-100.

<sup>3</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, ff. 307b-8a.



wrote a long letter to Shaikh Sufi explaining the mystic progression from the *Wahdat al-Wujud* to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*,<sup>1</sup> but Shaikh Sufi remained devoted to Ibn 'Arabi.

One of Shaikh Sufi's friends was Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti. After being initiated into several sufi orders, his brother, Shaikh Hamid bin Shaikh Qutbu'd-Din, a descendant of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdul-Haqq, initiated him into the Chishtiyya-Sabiriyya order. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman also considered himself to be an Uwaisi, claiming to have obtained initiation from the spirit of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti.<sup>2</sup> For some time he lived at Agra, but in 1028/1618 settled in his native village, Dhaniti. After the death of his brother in 1032/1622, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman became his successor.

The Shaikh often visited the tomb of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq of Rudauli and those of other sufi *pirs* in Lucknow. It was in Rudauli that he met Shaikh Muhibbu'llah of Allahabad, drawing from his company great spiritual benefit. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman wrote the *Mir'atu'l-asrar*, the *Mir'at-i Madari* and the *Mir'at-i Mas'udi*. His *Mir'atu'l-mukhlukat*, will be discussed in Chapter Eight. He died in 1094/1683 in his native village of Dhaniti.

At the end of the fifteenth century, famous Jaunpuri Chishtiyyas included Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din, one of the disciples of Shaikh Muhammad 'Isa. Even as a youth Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din was passionately devoted to asceticism and scornfully rejected any material assistance.<sup>3</sup> One of his *khalifas*, Saiyid 'Ali bin Qiwwam, was equally famous. Sometimes wearing a *khirqqa*, sometimes military uniform, for the last forty years of his life he refused to give any orders to his servants, considering this a form of dependence on others. This was in spite of the fact that he believed he himself was the servant of other dervishes. He died in 905/1499-1500.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din's son, Shaikh Adhan Jaunpuri, known as Adhan Shah, was also a prominent sufi. He survived for more than a hundred years and even when nearing death actively participated in *sama'*. He died in 976/1568-69 and was buried in Jaunpur.<sup>5</sup>

Towards the end of the sixteenth century the most famous Chishtiyya sufi in Lucknow was Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Jalil. Claiming that he had no *pir* and had received training directly from the spirit of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti, the *shajra* (family tree of sufi genealogy) he bequeathed to his disciples also failed to mention a *pir* and in his books and treatises he continued to assert he was an Uwaisi. His writings show a great frankness in expressing his belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and little con-

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, pp. 201-02.

<sup>2</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, ff. 9b-10a.

<sup>3</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 298b-99a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, f. 302a.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, f. 302b.



cern for the strict observance of the *Shari'a*. In one of his treatises he advised sufis that while sitting for *zikr* they should face the real Ka'ba, that is, they should realize that God was in all directions. He also maintained that in the initial stage of the *kalima* a sufi should consider himself the '*ayn* (essence) of the Prophet Muhammad, and that his existence was evanescent.<sup>1</sup> Again, he wrote advising sufis gradually to reduce their intake of food and transmute evil habits into more positive ones. According to him this was helpful in controlling the evil self. He advised sufis who were imbued with their own self-importance to commence their *zikr* with the Divine names of *Jalal* (Majesty) such as al-Qahhar (the Dominant), al-Jabbar (The Repairer), al-Mutakabbir (the Great). At a second stage the names which were common to both *Jalal* and *Jamal* should be recited :

'Al-Malik (the King), al-Quddus (the Holy), al-'Alim (the Knower).' In the third and final stage, names denoting *Jamal*, such as al-Mu'min (the Faithful) and al-Muhaimin (The Protector) should be repeated. *Jamal* should be the first part of *zikr* for sufis who were meek and humble and who would then proceed to *Jalal* by repeating the names which were common to both.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Jalil died in 1043/1633-34, leaving a number of important disciples to continue his missionary work.<sup>3</sup>

A native of Jaunpur, Shaikh Pir Muhammad obtained formal education in his native town and in Delhi and Qanauj. In Lucknow he completed his religious and theological studies, later going on a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. Shah 'Abdu'llah Sayyah Chishti who came from the mountainous regions of Herat, appeared in Lucknow and initiated Shaikh Pir Muhammad into the Chishtiyya order. Later he ordered him to settle permanently in Lucknow as a teacher of theology and mysticism. Choosing a piece of high ground on the banks of the Gomti, Shaikh Pir Muhammad built a hermitage not far from the tomb of Shah Mina of Lucknow.<sup>4</sup> The Shaikh generally fasted, obtaining whatever food he did eat from the bazaar. A lover of *sama'*, *qawwals* were always on hand to perform. In 1080/1669-70 he died.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh Pir Muhammad always refused to become embroiled in anything controversial. To the enemies of *sama'* he replied that he heard *sama'* in obedience to the traditions of the Chishtiyya *pirs*. The author of books on both *Fiqh* and sufism, he considered diseases were both

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 348b, 349a.

<sup>2</sup>The Shattariyyas also gave similar reasons for the repetition of these names *supra*, p. 155.

<sup>3</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 352b-53b.

<sup>4</sup>The place is known as Pir Muhammad's *tila*; between the tombs of Shah Mina and Shaikh Pir Muhammad is the Medical College of Lucknow.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 422b.



physical and spiritual; the former were cured by a physician, but spiritual illness, being caused by the dominance of one instinct over the other, could be set right only by a perfect sufi guide.<sup>1</sup> In another treatise devoted to a commentary on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, he wrote that mystics abandoned eternal formalities to become lost in the wine of love. Difficulties transformed them into *majzubs* and they were drowned in the ocean of *Ahadiyya*. Thus they were able to ignore both the laws of the *Shari'a* and the *Tariqa*.<sup>2</sup>

In his correspondence, Shaikh Pir Muhammad wrote that people from different religious communities greatly differed from each other, some being devoted to their own desires, some to fantasy and some to doubt. The sufi who had realized the Reality was not concerned with his own self, but rather with eternal Beauty and was therefore engrossed in contemplation. In another letter he likened the Divine Being to a seed which produced trees, flowers and fruits, but could not Itself be perceived unless all the manifestations veiling It were removed.<sup>3</sup>

In Mohan (near Lucknow, in the present-day district of Unnao, U.P.) lived Shaikh Junaid, known as the second Junaid<sup>4</sup> due to his piety and adherence to the *Shari'a*. During the night he performed *zikr-i jahr* (loudly recited *zikr*) near the banks of the river Sa'i. To keep himself awake he would jump into the river where he indulged in *zikr-i jali* (*zikr* in a low voice). After this he would commence the *zikr-i khafi* (*zikr* recited mentally).

Shaikh Junaid supported himself by selling firewood from the jungle. Whatever was surplus he gave away in charity. He indulged excessively in *sama'*, believing that some forms of *zikr* could not be performed without *sama'*. According to the *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, the Shaikh composed eloquent verses in Arabic eulogizing the Prophet Muhammad and the Chishtiyya *pirs*. He also composed verses in Persian and Hindi and was the author of several mystical treatises on sufism.<sup>5</sup>

In Unnao, a prominent Afghan who became a leading Chishtiyya in the sixteenth century was Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Kasi. A member of the Afghan Kasi tribe, he enjoyed considerable respect from his own as well as other tribes. He held a high post in the Afghan government under Sher Shah Sur. After the downfall of the Afghans and the restoration of the Mughals to the throne, Jalalu'd-Din Kasi decided to renounce the world and moved to Bangarmao in Unnao where he joined the *khanqah* of Shah Muhammad Chishti. Being unable to find genuine

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 424b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 426b-27a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 430a.

<sup>4</sup>Junaid of Baghdad (d. 298/910), *HSI*, pp. 54-58.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 426b-31a.



spiritual illumination, on his *pir's* advice he went to the tomb of Shaikh Badru'd-Din of Bada'un. Constant recitation of the Qur'an and caring of the tomb resulted in the desired illumination. Within a short period he was surrounded by a large number of people.

Shaikh Jalal decided to adopt a boy who he believed would develop into a great mystic. In a dream the spirit of Shaikh Badru'd-Din promised that this wish would be fulfilled. About this time a handsome Kayastha boy from Asiwan (also in the Unnao district) fell into a state of ecstasy upon reading some Arabic verses in the *Gulistan* of Sa'di eulogizing the Prophet Muhammad. After becoming converted to Islam his fear of retribution from his relatives forced him to flee to the *khanqah* of Shaikh Jalal at Bada'un. Once more Shaikh Jalal dreamed of Shaikh Badru'd-Din—this time his spirit announced that the arrival of the boy was imminent and that he should be trained carefully. Accordingly the Shaikh adopted the boy, calling him 'Abdu'llah, and began educating him.

Shaikh Jalal developed the habit of meditating and reciting the Qur'an until midnight at the tomb of Shaikh Badru'd-Din some distance from the town. These nocturnal habits severely hampered local thieves who operated around this area. Shaikh Jalal proved such a threat to their activities that in 1013/1604-05 they murdered him.

Shaikh Jalal was succeeded by Shaikh 'Abdu'llah who was also a great devotee of meditation and prayer. For whole nights he would not sleep, generally reciting the Qur'an while remaining standing erect. One of his leading disciples was Shaikh Taha of Rae-Bareilly. After Shaikh 'Abdu'llah's death in 1034/1624-25, he was succeeded by Shaikh Taha.<sup>1</sup>

Those of the Afghan tribes most profoundly devoted to the Chishtiyyas were the Shuryanis and Khweshgis around Peshawar and Qasur (near Lahore). The earliest known sufi from these tribes was Wutu, the son of Shura bin Khweshgi. The brothers of Wutu were Husain Khweshgi and Khalaf Khweshgi. Wutu visited a number of sufis in search of a spiritual *pir*. Finally he became the disciple of Khwaja Maudud Chishti<sup>2</sup> in Chisht where he remained for about forty years.

Before his death in 577/1181-82, Khwaja Maudud appointed Shaikh Wutu *khalifa* and ordered him to return to his homeland. After some years spent at his *pir's* tomb, he finally returned to Peshawar. At first the Afghans refused to accept him as a *pir*. However a miracle eventually convinced them of his saintliness. Many of his tribesmen became his disciples and he became known as the *Pir-i Kibar* (Great Pir). After his death the Khweshgi Afghans continued in their devotion to the Chishtiyya order under the influence of his spiritual successors.

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 307b-8b.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, p. 116.



In the tenth century/sixteenth century Shaikh Hajji Uwais, a descendant of the Pir-i Kibar, rose to considerable spiritual eminence. He was a *hajji* and was believed to have obtained guidance from the spirit of the Pir-i-Kibar. He died in 1016/1608.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Ahmad Sa'id Shuryani of Qasur was also believed to have been trained as a sufi by the spirit of Pir-i Kibar. Although a strict observer of the rules of the *Shari'a*, he was exceedingly fond of *sama'*. He loved the company of mendicants and beggars and ignored the rich. The Afghans were highly impressed with the supernatural, miraculous powers of Shaikh Ahmad; even Hindus approached him to pray for the fulfilment of their needs and offered him gifts. An anecdote relating to his miraculous power indicates that he even received visits from Rajput chiefs. He died in 1018/1609-10 and was buried in Qasur.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh Rahmat Shuryani Chishti had also obtained training from the spirit of the Pir-i Kibar. The Afghans believed that he could converse with birds and animals. After his death in 1025/1616-17 he too was buried in Qasur.<sup>3</sup>

Maulana Shaikh Ahmad Shuryani, the grandfather of Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi Chishti, the author of the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, was a leading sufi and 'alim. He had been educated and subsequently initiated into the Chishtiyya order by Shaikh Ishaq bin Shaikh Kaku Chishti (d. 996/1588)<sup>4</sup> of Lahore, a descendant of Baba Farid. According to the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat* Shaikh Ahmad was the first Afghan who was both a leading 'alim and sufi. He used to lament to God that he had not been born a despised weaver instead of one of the proud Afghan class.<sup>5</sup> The 'ulama' of Lahore held Maulana Shaikh Ahmad in some awe, and such outstanding sufis as Shaikh Ahmad Faruqi Sirhindi (the Mujaddid), Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, Shaikh 'Isa Sindi and Shaikh

<sup>1</sup>'Abdu'llah Khweshgi Qasuri, *Akhbaru'l-auliya' min lisanu'l-asfiya'*, Asiatic Society Bengal, Calcutta, Ivanow, 273, ff. 5b-15b.

<sup>2</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 375b-76b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, ff. 376b-77a.

<sup>4</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, p. 52. Shaikh Sa'du'llah Bani Isra'il, a pupil of Shaikh Ishaq Kaku, was in his youth a strict observer of the *Shari'a* but as an old man he fell in love with a dancing girl and squandered his entire property for her sake. One night when he was drinking wine, a *muhtasib* (the police officer who prevented drinking and gambling and examined weights, measures and provisions) and his disciples entered the Shaikh's house by climbing over the wall. The Shaikh admitting his single offence said to the officer that he on the other hand was guilty of three offences: (1) spying upon a Muslim (2) entering the house without permission (3) entering the house as thieves. Similar remarks had once been made by a criminal against the second Caliph 'Umar. However before his death the Shaikh repented and wrote a commentary on the *Jawahiru'l-Qur'an* of Imam Ghazali and other works, *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 53-56.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, f. 369a.



'Abdu'l-Latif Burhanpuri were also deeply impressed by his spiritual eminence.

According to Shaikh 'Abdu'lla Khweshgi, the Mujaddid and the Maulana often held private discussions on mystical philosophy. In Delhi, the Maulana rejected all attempts by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq to have him accept a *madad-i ma'ash* and stipends. At Burhanpur, the Maulana gave eloquent lectures on the *Shari'a* to Shaikh 'Isa Sindi. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Latif of Burhanpuri affirmed that the race into which the Maulana had been fortunate enough to be born was destined for even greater prominence. He also claimed that the Maulana was the greatest '*alim* and sufi of his acquaintance. Maulana Ahmad refused to commit his ideas to writing, believing that earlier authors had exhausted all knowledge. However he did in fact write the *Sawalat-i Ahmadi*. Extracts in the *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat* indicate that the Maulana was a dedicated follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He died in 1030/1620-21.<sup>1</sup>

One of the descendants of the Pir-i Kibar, Shaikh Hajji Gagan Shuryani, was an eminent Chishtiyya saint. He reportedly made seven pilgrimages to Mecca and on one was divinely inspired to become the disciple of Shaikh 'Isa Mashwani who lived the life of a *malamati*. Finding a jar of wine in the cell of Shaikh 'Isa, the Hajji was scandalized but the Shaikh, catching hold of him, poured the wine down the Hajji's throat. Immediately Shaikh 'Isa became a *majzub* (ecstatic) and gave up wearing clothes, rarely performed *namaz* and shaved his head, beard and eyebrows in the style of a *qalandar*, professing facial hair to be a worldly decoration. By nature a withdrawn ascetic, after an exhibition of his ability to perform miracles, his devotees began lighting fires in his honour, fire being a symbol of the Divine Majesty.<sup>2</sup>

Another Afghan sufi to be trained by the spirit of the Pir-i Kibar was Shaikh Phugi Afghan 'Aziz za'i. When he was involved in *sama'* he remained unconscious for the whole night. The *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat* describes his many miracles. He died in 1069/1658-59 and was buried in Qasur.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Bayazid Batakza'i Chishti's *pir* was Shaikh Batak. Once during a *sama'* performance Shaikh Bayazid offered to turn volunteers into perfect sufis, and reportedly a number of Khweshgi Afghans in the audience availed themselves of this opportunity, later becoming well-known sufis. Each time Shaikh Bayazid was in an ecstatic state he made the same offer, and in this way he acquired a considerable number of disciples.<sup>4</sup>

### Gujarat

In the fourteenth century Gujarat became a Chishtiyya centre under the

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 369b-74b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 377a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 374b-75b.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, ff. 377a-b.



guidance of Shah Bariku'llah Chishti, a disciple and *khalifa* of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya. His mausoleum was outside the Idar Gate, near Hajjipura, Ahmadabad. However, in their devotion to the Suhrawardiyyas the Sultans of Gujarat ignored the Chishtiyyas. A proverb then current in Gujarat said, 'The Chishtis baked and the Bukharis (Suhrawardiyyas) ate.'<sup>1</sup>

The *Mir'at-i Ahmadi* gives a brief account of an interesting Chishtiyya *pir*, Musa Suhag, a contemporary of the Suhrawardiyya *pir*, Shah 'Alam Bukhari<sup>2</sup> (b. 817/1415 d. 880/1475). Accustomed to wearing glass bangles on his arms, in order to conceal his eminence as a mystic Musa Suhag lived among the street dancers of Ahmadabad. After his death Shah 'Alam dispatched his successor to bury the Shaikh with all due honour and ordered that the bangles should not be removed in keeping with a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad that one will be raised on the Day of Resurrection as one has lived in this world. Shah's representative was also ordered carefully to conceal Musa Suhag's grave and it was therefore not distinctly marked.<sup>3</sup> In spite of these precautions, the Gujaratis believed he was a great saint who could send rain and perform other supernatural miracles.

The greatest Chishtiyya in the early sixteenth century in Gujarat was, however, Shaikh Hasan Muhammad Chishti bin Shaikh Ahmad, popularly known as Shaikh Miyanji. Born in 929/1522-23, he was only five or six when a sufi called Shaikh Jamalu'd-Din Jumman Chishti appointed him his successor. Shaikh Muhammad 'Ali, the son of Shaikh Nur Bakhsh initiated him into the Qadiriyya, Nur Bakhshiyya, Taifuriyya and other orders. He remained predominantly a Chishti, however, being initiated by his father into that order. Sultan Muhammad III (950/1543-962/1554) assigned him several villages, whose income the Shaikh invested in the construction of a mosque inside Ahmadabad city near Shahpur Gate. It took eight years to finish, was completed in 973/1565-66 at a cost of 100,000 rupees. He spent lavishly too during the '*urs* (feasts of sufi *pirs*). The author of a commentary on the Qur'an entitled the *Tafsir-i Muhammadi*, he also wrote notes on the Qur'anic commentary of Baizawi. He was engaged in teaching and training sufi disciples for twenty-seven years during his father's lifetime and for fourteen years after his death. Survived by four sons and two daughters, the Shaikh died on 28 Zu'lqa'da 982/11 March 1575.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Hasan Muhammad's second son, Shaikh Muhammad Chishti

<sup>1</sup>'Ali Muhammad Khan Bahadur, *Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, Baroda, 1930, pp. 73-74.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, p. 284.

<sup>3</sup>*Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, Supplement, pp. 74-75.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 75-76.



(b. 956/1549-50), whom he trained, succeeded him. The occupation of Gujarat by the Mughals in 981/1573 had diminished the fortunes of the Shaikh's family but he refused to accept the old grants revived by Akbar and destroyed such *farmans* from the Sultans of Gujarat as were in his possession. Later Shaikh Muhammad Chishti began to live outside the city on the banks of the Sabarmati, coming to his *khanqah* only on Fridays to offer congregational prayers. However after some years he reverted to *khanqah* life, indulging in *zikr* and *sama'* without the use of musical instruments. Returning from a pilgrimage to the tombs of Chishti sufis in Delhi, at Jahangir's request he went to see him in Ajmer and reluctantly accepted the grant of a village for his expenses in the name of his sons. In 1027/1617-18 he again called on the Emperor during a visit to Gujarat. On 29 Rabi' I 1040/5 Nov. 1630 the Shaikh died.<sup>1</sup> Of his four surviving sons, one died three days after his father, the second became a recluse and the third, Shaikh Siraju'd-Din (d. 1050/1640-41), in accordance with his father's will, relinquished his claim to succession in favour of his nephew, Shaikh Abu Yusuf Yahya, the son of Shaikh Mahmud and the grandson of Shaikh Muhammad. Shaikh Yahya Chishti who from 1087/1676-77 on led the last fourteen years of a long life in Medina, came to be known as Shaikh Yahya Madani and was certainly the greatest Chishtiyya *pir* of his time.

#### *Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi and his successors*

We shall be discussing biographical details of Shaikh Yahya in Chapter Six. In the following pages we shall refer to the life and impact of his disciple, Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi, son of Hajji Nuru'llah, who revived the glory and respect which the Chishtiyyas had enjoyed in Delhi during the days of Shaikh Nizamud-Din Auliya'. Born in Shahjahanabad (also known as Jahanabad or Delhi) on 24 Jumada II 1060<sup>2</sup>/24 June 1650, his ancestors had come from Khujand.<sup>3</sup> His grandfather Shaikh Ahmad-i Mi'mar (d. 1059/1649), was a mathematician and an engineer. He designed the Taj Mahal at Agra and the Red Fort in Delhi.<sup>4</sup> Ahmad's three sons,

<sup>1</sup>Mir'at-i Ahmadi, pp. 76-79.

<sup>2</sup>Maktubat-i Kalimi, Delhi, 1315/1897-98; letter no. 125.

<sup>3</sup>Najmu'd-Din Nagauri, *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, Rampur, 1289/1872-73, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup>*Az taraf-i dawar-i giti janab.*

Nadir-i 'Asr amda u ra khitab

Bud imaratgar-i an padshah

Dasht dar-an hazrat-i farkhunda rah

Agra chu shud mazrib-i rayat-i Shah

Bas ki bar-u bud 'inayat-i shah

Kard bi-hukm-i Shah-i kishwar gusha

Rauza-i Mumtaz-i Mahal ra bina



'Ata'u'llah,<sup>1</sup> Lutfu'llah<sup>2</sup> and Hajji Nuru'llah, were also mathematicians and engineers. Nuru'llah was also a calligrapher and made drawings of the inscriptions for the great Jami' Masjid in Delhi.

Shah Kalimu'llah's secular education was of a high standard. In order to qualify for the civil service he wrote a number of commentaries on Baha'u'd-Din Amuli's works on astronomy and on Ibn Sina's *Qanun fi'l-tibb* (Canon of Medicine). Nevertheless he felt drawn to sufism through contact with some of his teachers who were also mystics, such as Shaikh Abu'l-Riza (the uncle of Shah Waliu'llah) and Shaikh Burhanu'd-Din Shattari.

The story of how the Shah became a sufi is one often found in Indian sufi literature of the earlier centuries. In his youth Shah Kalimu'llah was believed to have fallen in love with a Khattri boy from Burhanpur who proved indifferent to the smitten Kalimu'llah. The Shah approached a *majzub* who, on the receipt of a gift, somehow managed to fulfil one's wishes. This time the offering was a bundle of sweets. The following day the Khattri boy did indeed fall in love with the Shah, who soon tired of his new lover, however, and developed instead a fascination for the *majzub*. The *majzub* rejected the Shah saying that he himself could offer him only the fire of ecstasy but that Shaikh Yahya Madani, who had settled in Medina could give him proper training. So keen was the Shah to go to Medina that he left India without saying goodbye to anyone, including

*Baz bi-hukm-i Shah-i anjum-sipah*

*Shah-i jahan dawar-i giti panah*

*Qal'a-i Dihli ki na-darad nazir*

*Kard bina Ahmad-i raushan-zamir*

Lutfu'llah Muhandis, *Masnawi* quoted by Saiyid Sulaiman Nadwi, Lahore ka ek muhandis khandan jis ne Taj aur Lal Qal'a banaya in the *Proceedings of the Idara-i Ma'arf-i Islamia*, first session, held at Lahore, 15 and 16 April, 1933, Lahore, 1935, Muhammad 'Abdu'llah Chaghatai, A family of the great Mughal architects, *Islamic Culture*, April, 1937, pp. 200-9. Storey, C.A., *Persian Literature*, II, part I, London, 1958, p. 15.

<sup>1</sup>'Ata'u'llah Rushdi bin ustad Ahmad-i mi'mar was the author of the *Khulasa-i raz* on arithmetic, algebra and mensuration in poetry. [Khudabakhsh library Patna, Bankipur, XVII, 1730, manuscript copied in 1097/1686] and translator of the *Vijaganita* (algebra) by Bhaskara Acharya, of Bidar in Deccan (b. 1114 AD). Both works were completed in Shahjahan's reign, the latter work entitled *Tarjama-i Bij Ganit* was written in 1044/1634-5 and dedicated to Shahjahan. British Museum manuscript of the *Tarjama* is dated 1141/1728.

<sup>2</sup>Lutfu'llah Muhandis wrote a mathematical work, the *Khawas-i a'dad* (British Museum MS., dated, 1130/1718), and wrote a work on mathematics in Arabic *Khulasat al-hisab* (Manuscript in Raza Library, Rampur). Author of other mathematical tracts, in 1070/1659 he wrote an ethical work, the *Sihr-i halal* (Bombay University Library). Lutfu'llah's two sons Imamu'd-Din Riyazi and Khairu'llah were also the authors and translators of mathematical tracts. The latter collaborated with Raja Jai Singh in building observatories and also wrote works on astronomy. Storey, C.A., *Persian Literature*, II, p. 95.



his mother.<sup>1</sup> Since Shaikh Yahya Madani died on 28 Safar 1101/11 December 1689, Shah Kalimu'llah's visit to Medina must have been some time between 1087/1676-77 and 1101/1689, as was his return to Delhi. Although Shaikh Yahya initiated Shah Kalimu'llah into three orders (the Chishtiyya, the Suhrawardiyya and the Qadiriyya), honouring the preference of his *pir*, the Shaikh remained basically a Chishtiyya.

In Delhi the Shah settled near the Bazaar Khanam between the Red Fort and the Jami' Mosque, living according to the austere code of the Chishtiyyas and rejecting all offers of *futuh*.<sup>2</sup> Aurangzib succeeded in creating his own an aura of sanctity which the Shah desperately tried to throw off.<sup>3</sup> Later he staunchly refused to permit Emperor Farrukhsiyar (1124/1713-1131/1719) to call on him, but relented after considerable pressure was exerted by his disciples. In his old age his relatives and disciples accepted lavish gifts and accumulated much wealth for the Shah. After his death on 24 Rabi' I 1142/17 October 1729, Shah Kalimu'llah's estate was estimated somewhere in the vicinity of 100,000 rupees.<sup>4</sup> Obviously, like Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', he had been spectacularly unsuccessful in his attempt to clear the storehouses in his *khanqah*.

After his return from Medina, Shah Kalimu'llah wrote a sufic commentary on the Qur'an. But it was his treatises which were masterpieces of eighteenth century sufic thought, the most important being the *Kashkul* which was completed on 1 Zu'lqa'da 1101/6 August 1690,<sup>5</sup> shortly after his return from Medina. The *Kashkul*, plus its appendix, the *Muraqqa'*, soon came to be regarded as a new framework for Chishtiyya teachings and practices. Below are some important extracts from the *Kashkul*.

Prior to His association with the phenomena (on the plane of primordial absoluteness or in the stage before self-manifestation) the Absolute was in abysmal darkness; there was no manifestation of Unmanifest. Because of His love for Himself the Absolute chose to manifest Himself in a descending order as Lord and then as phenomena. By reason of limitation and determination the Absolute Being was named Lover and by rending the bounds of limitation He was known as the Beloved. The determination obtained perfection only by seeking to return to the Absolute and by joining the same *Berangi* (Essence divested of attributes)

<sup>1</sup>Gul Muhammad Ma'rufi Karkhi, *Zikru'l-asfiya' fi takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya' dar manqabat-i Shamsu'l-Huda*, Delhi, 1312/1894, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, p. 85. The Shah's only property was a house in Delhi which he had let at a monthly rental of two rupees eight annas, himself living in a small house taken on a monthly rental of eight annas. Two rupees were spent on the family's monthly expenses.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat-i Kalimi*, letter no. 47.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, no. 64. Nuru'd-Din Husain, *Fakhr'u't-talibin*, Delhi, 1315/1897-98, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup>*Kashkul-i Kalimi*, Delhi, 1308/1890-91, p. 2.



from which it had emerged. We refer here to the special form of self-determination of the Absolute (that is, Man), the comprehensive theatre of Essence and attributes. Man is distinguished from all determinations because of his undertaking to shoulder the burden of Trust.<sup>1</sup> The perfection of man lies in reaching the stage of *fana' fi'llah* (evanescence unto God) and abiding in Him, the Eternal Lord. The first goal of man is the *sair ila-Allah* (journey towards God) and the second is the *sair fi-Allah* (journey in God) although neither is limited to either the first or to the second.<sup>2</sup>

Shah Kalimu'llah then made a number of points which he divided into what he called 'morsels' :

*Morsel 1. Unio-mystica (wasl)* signifies abnegation of all that is not Allah, indifference to other phenomenal existence and absorption and extinction in the *Berangi*<sup>3</sup> and the Absolute. The beginning of this stage is marked by unconsciousness and a trance-like state resembling death, except that in death one does not partake of the Divine mystery whereas in the mystic unconsciousness one's whole being partakes of it. The seeker who realizes the stage of partaking of the Divine mystery, even though this stage lasts no longer than an hour, when he again regains sobriety is known as *wali* (protege of God), one who is invested with the knowledge of the Divine mystery. Should a sufi be granted the stage of permanent trance and mystic intoxication he is classified among those who are coloured with the Divine colour. In short, if the mystic tends to destroy his self in contemplation of the Essence he [in fact] completes his course of mystic ascension; should he ignore this goal and cast his eyes right and left and involve himself with other determinations, he strays from the correct path.<sup>4</sup>

*Morsel 2.* Sufic works explain each mystic station by use of special terminology and characterize it with a specific significance, to the extent that while the heart is bent exclusively on the station which it thirsts for, it does not concern itself with others, and firmly resolves not to rest content except in that station. The heart feels that the vain desire to possess all is to forego all. Invariably the heart hesitates irrevocably to choose a particular station in the spiritual progression although every mystic is free to choose for himself his own station.

Shah Kalimu'llah suggests the following. The traveller on the sufi voyage should first perform the obligatory and supererogatory duties

<sup>1</sup>The reference is to the following verse of the Qur'an frequently quoted by sufis. Lo ! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from hearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo ! he hath proved a tyrant and a fool. *Qur'an*, XXXIII, 72.

<sup>2</sup>*Kashkul*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>4</sup>*Kashkul*, pp. 3-4.



prescribed by the *Sunna*, and then embark on a perception of the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*). He should practice *zikr*, reflect on *Tawhid* and be friendly with others. For a short period he should fervently offer supererogatory prayers, recite the Qur'an, repeat the names of God and reject the temptation to achieve supernatural power associated with the Divine names and avoid forms of recollection and remembrance which are unnecessary. Instead of this, his days and nights should be spent endeavouring to turn away from his own self, so that Divine Grace may attract his being to God, in turn enabling him to attain the goal of the *fana' al-fana'* (total extinction of the individuality) and *baqa' al-baqa'* (permanently abiding in God). At that stage the seeker's being does not note any difference between himself and the Essence, his attributes, and actions. Whatever leads to the consummation of this goal should be undertaken and whatever interferes with it should be avoided, for the objectives of sufis of all *silsilas* are identical. It is necessary for seekers aspiring after *unio-mystica* to indulge in those mystical exercises leading to a progressive self-effacement. The best forms of exercises are *zikr* and *fikr* (reflection). Furthermore some forms of *zikr* are preferable to others.<sup>1</sup>

*Morsel 3.* Sufis widely differ among themselves regarding the various forms of *zikr* and *fikr* but the best account is that given by Abu 'Abdu'r Rahman Sulami (d. 412/1021-22). According to him there are many forms of *zikr*.

1. *Zikr-i lisan* (*zikr* of the tongue) needs no explanation.
2. *Zikr-i qalb* (*zikr* of the heart) calls for the cleansing of the heart of sensuous passions and devilish temptations in order to attain absorption into the *zikr* of the Lord.
3. *Zikr-i sirr* (*zikr* of the innermost aspect of the soul) involves filling the heart with *zikr* in such a way that nothing interferes with the thoughts of the seeker, even if he wishes this to occur. Leading from *zikr-i sirr* is *zikr-i qalb*, a subtle thing felt above the heart. Permanent *huzur* (presence before God) is imperative for successful *zikr*.
4. *Zikr-i ruh* (*zikr* of the spirit) brings on the annihilation of the attributes of the self in a sufi who perceives that it is not he who performs *zikr* but God Himself, who concentrates on the sufi. In this condition neither *zikr* nor mystic ecstasy nor the attributes of the self remain.

According to Shah Kalimu'llah, Abu 'Abdu'r-Rahman Sulami,<sup>2</sup> classifies *fikr* (reflection) in a similar way, which the Shah outlines as follows :

1. Reflection on matters sinful and on the neglect of duties due to God.

<sup>1</sup>*Kashkul*, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, p. 62.



2. Reflection on the Divine bounty and the ingratitude of man and on the fact that were he to show gratitude it would be nothing in comparison with the Divine beneficence.
3. Reflection on Eternity and Sufi inability to comprehend it.
4. Reflection on the creations, both angelic and phenomenal, overwhelming the heart with the glory and power of God the Most High and reminding the mystic of the rewards and punishments promised by Him. It should be known that the objective of the sufi involved in *fikr* is the self, and the objective in *zikr* is God the Most High. Imams or sufi leaders, accordingly consider *zikr* superior to *fikr*.

Shah Kalimu'llah adds that in contrast to *fikr*, *zikr* is an attribute of God. Whatever belongs to His attributes is perfect and whatever does not is imperfect. In fact the sufi performing *zikr* turns to the Divine Essence, for *zikr* is the product of *ma'rifa* and love, while the sufi concentrating on *fikr* is involved in an examination of the self, time, ecstasy, number, profit and loss. In short *zikr* follows *fikr* and *fikr* follows *zikr* but *zikr* is the more perfect, lofty and pure of the two and leads to union with God. God reminds people :

'Therefore remember Me, I will remember you'<sup>1</sup>

Thus, says Shah Kalimu'llah, He qualifies Himself within *zikr* and not *fikr*.<sup>2</sup>

*Morsel 4.* The godly mystic 'Abdu'l-Karim Jili, says, One who attains the *zikr-i qalb* (*zikr* of heart) hears sometimes or always from all things (or from some extant things) that *zikr* which he himself repeats. The test of permanence in the stage of *zikr-i ruh* (*zikr* of spirit) is that the sufi who performs the above *zikr* hears everything, reciting special words proclaiming Divine glory. He does not perceive anyone else but God the Most High as an active agent...

The Shah went on to describe various forms of *zikr*, concluding that the principal objective of each of these was to reorientate the heart in order to prepare it for consummation with the ecstatic love of God. He added that although training in *zikr* had a rapid impact on youth, on no account should it be imparted to those of very tender years, for the heat from *zikr* could burn them. On the other hand, the labour that youthful strength could sustain could not be borne by the old, and the mystical inspiration attained by someone in youth could not be obtained in old age. Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Narnauli therefore advised older seekers to eat *Pinwar*<sup>3</sup> seeds in order to retain the warmth of their youth.

Criticizing scholars of *Fiqh*, Shah Kalimu'llah wrote that their rejection of the importance of *zikr* of the heart and acceptance only of *zikr* of the tongue was simply designed to assert their own superiority, while they

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, II, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup>An Indian herb.

<sup>2</sup>*Kashkul*, pp. 5-6.



themselves were unable to understand the essential nature of the *zikr* which was designed to overcome all forgetfulness. He also added that the Chishtiyyas, Kubrawiyyas, Shattariyyas and Qadiriyyas considered *habs-i nafs* (breath suspension or control) indispensable, but that the Naqshbandiyyas neither saw it as significant nor rejected it out of hand. The Suhrawardiyya *zikr*, however, did not incorporate *habs-i nafs*.

According to Shah Kalimu'llah, breath control was of two types : *habs-i nafs* (breath suspension) and *hasr-i nafs* (breathing below the normal rate). In *habs-i nafs* the breath was drawn from the stomach and the navel to the chest, or according to some to the brain, the stomach and the navel moving closer to the spine during the movement. Closing nostrils, ears and eyes with the fingers was not essential in this position, although it was generally done as a precautionary measure against unsteady movements. This technique, the Shah claimed, was most effective and generated excessive heat. He described another form of *habs-i nafs* which was done by controlling the breath in the chest through puffing or expanding a section of the stomach most remote from the spine, a movement which proved a great boon to the digestive system. *Hasr-i nafs*, or respiration below the normal rate of breathing generated less heat in the body than *habs-i nafs*.<sup>1</sup> Shah Kalimu'llah acknowledged that sufis had borrowed *habs-i nafs* and other similar practices from yogis, who were expert in the art.<sup>2</sup> However in order to give it an Islamic touch he stated that in fact it had been imparted by Khizr to Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Khaliq<sup>3</sup> Ghujduwani (d. 617/1220).<sup>4</sup>

According to Shah Kalimu'llah, out of the eighty-four yoga postures,<sup>5</sup> Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Qadiri recommended the following to his disciples. The devotee should sit firmly cross-legged on the ground, placing the left calf of the leg below the testicles and the right calf close to it. The breath should be drawn upwards by pulling in the navel towards the back, while the mouth was closed with the tongue held firmly inside. Meditat-

<sup>1</sup>*Kashkul*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, p. 95.

<sup>5</sup>Shah Kalimu'llah translated *yogic asanas* as *baithak jog*. 'In theory there are 8,400,000 *asanas*, one for each of the living species that Siva brought into being simply by assuming their characteristic *sthana*, 'stand'. Out of this vast number of *asanas*, only eighty-four are ordinarily known to men, of which only thirty-three give good results, and only three can be profitably employed by anyone.' B. Walker, *Hindu World*, I, London, 1968, p. 73. The *asana* (*baithak*) mentioned by Shah Kalimu'llah is a form of the *padmasna* (*padma*, lotus), also called *dhyanasana* (*dhyān*, meditation), 'where one sits with legs crossed, right foot resting on the left thigh, left foot crossed over on right leg, soles of feet turned upwards. The arms are usually laid in certain set position on the knees, but one variation has the arms crossed behind one's back with the hands holding the big toes.' *Hindu World*, p. 76.



ing on the syllables *U*, *Hi* and *Hiya*,<sup>1</sup> his eyes should not be closed in sleep. If the practice continued unabated for three days without nourishment or sleep, a trance like state emerged in which Divine secrets were revealed to the devotee.<sup>2</sup>

The principal aim of *zikr*; the Shah continued, was to remind sufis of the evanescence of the self into Allah. He believed that the mere repetition of the *kalima*, *La Ilaha ila'llah* (There is no God but Allah), was itself hardly effective. On the contrary, the marvel of *zikr* was contained in the fact that the seeker engaged in the *zikr* of Allah heard the word Allah coming from everything which existed —jungles, walls, cells, stones, even his own hands and feet. This mystical state emerged due to the dominance of *zikr* in the seeker and did not imply that he was literally listening to these phenomenal objects repeating *zikr*. Thus all things according to their different states were engaged in various forms of *zikr*. In the initial stages of *zikr* vibrations in the heart were initiated from repeating such names as Allah, Haqq or *Huwa*, a particular sound being associated with each name. Constant occupation with *zikr*, however, led to an awareness on the part of the devotee of God in His Absolute state, undetermined and unconditioned. At this stage names and attributes were insignificant to the seeker who became overwhelmed by *saut-i sarmadi* (perpetual sound) or *saut-i layazali* (eternal sound), which an earlier teacher of the Shah, and Shaikh Yahya Madani, had identified with the *anahata*<sup>3</sup> (*dhvani*) of yogis.

Shah Kalimu'llah suggested the following exercises should be undertaken in order to be able to hear *saut-i sarmadi* or *anahata* (*dhvani*). The seeker should firmly close the ears with his forefingers before carefully listening to a sound which resembled that of continuous drops of rain falling. His mind should be firmly fixed on the sound, his attention total. After the devotee had achieved some degree of mastery of this, he should slowly withdraw his fingers, at the same time continuing to hear this mysterious sound without interference from worldly noises. Ultimately he would be able to hear the sound instinctively, regardless of the world and its distractions. The bliss and Divine grace of this stage, the Shah had been told, were indescribable. The Shah was also informed that some devotees filled their ears with black peppercorns rolled in cotton, the warmth of which facilitated the hearing of the sound. Some even tied each peppercorn with string, pulling them out gently one by one. According to Shaikh Yahya Madani, the aim of these spiritual exercises was to

<sup>1</sup>Hindi form of *Huwa* in plural *Hu*, (He).

<sup>2</sup>*Kashkul*, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup>According to the yogic texts 'when all the senses are shut up and the nerves controlled and the breath suspended through a yogic process there arises a spontaneous sound within, which is known as the *anahata dhvani*', S. Das Gupta, *Obscure religious cults*, 3rd edition, Calcutta, 1969, pp. 58-9.



protect the mind and heart from worldly distractions and enable one to concentrate on a main objective. The sound itself was merely a medium between the seeker and God, generating the stages of ecstasy, trance and rapture which led to *fana' al-fana'*.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of Shah Kalimu'llah the direction and care of his Delhi *khanqah* fell to his son. The most outstanding of his *khalifas*, however, was Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din of Aurangabad whose ancestors were descended from Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi. Shaikh Nizam was born at Kakori<sup>2</sup> in the Lucknow district in c. 1060/1650-51. After being educated at Kakori and Lucknow he went to Delhi for further education. By that time Shah Kalimu'llah had returned from Mecca and Medina and his *khanqah* was emerging as a dynamic Chishtiyya centre. When Nizamu'd-Din called, a *sama'* session was in progress. However, the Shah's servant informed him of the visit of the stranger, Nizamu'd-Din, disguised as a beggar. The sufis who were gathered around objected to this interruption during *sama'* hours which was contrary to the accepted rules of courtesy, but the Shah overruled them, warmly welcoming the visitor.<sup>3</sup>

Still in the guise of a beggar, Nizamu'd-Din began regular visits to the Shah's *khanqah* and some weeks later was initiated by the Shah as a Chishti disciple. The progress of the Shaikh was rapid and several years before the Emperor Aurangzib's death, Shah Kalimu'llah appointed Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din his *khalifa* for the whole of the Deccan, the Shaikh lived within the imperial camp, finally settling in Aurangabad. Shah Kalimu'llah admitted that the duties of working in the Mughal camp where the soldiers and the royal family were devoted to the Naqshbandiyyas (not necessarily the successors of the Mujaddid) were arduous, requiring tact, equanimity and patience.<sup>4</sup> He kept regular contact with his disciple, flooding him with letters which contained all sorts of advice. He also never failed to ask after the health of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, a sufferer from venereal disease.<sup>5</sup> His concern for Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's happiness even extended to an offer to screen for him a suitable bride from his own family.<sup>6</sup> In return the Shaikh continually glorified

<sup>1</sup>*Kashkul-i Kalimi*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>2</sup>According to some authorities he was born in Nagraon (Nagram). Both Kakori and Nagram are in Lucknow. According to the *Manaqubu'l-mahbubin*, the Shaikh belonged to *Kakori-o Nagraon* (p. 47). The authors of the *Manaqib-i Fakhriya Takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya'* and the *Khazinatul-asfiya'* inform us that the Shaikh belonged to *Purab* or the eastern districts of India. To the people of Delhi, Lucknow was *Purab* (east).

<sup>3</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, Delhi, Persian no. 728, f. 3b.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat-i Kalimi*, letter no. 6.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, letter no. 29.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, letter no. 57.



the name of his *pir* throughout the Deccan, by this time a flourishing Chishti centre.

People from all sections of the community became Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din's disciples. The most important of the Shaikh's disciples was one of the Turanis, the members of a powerful pressure group in the Mughal government, that great champion of Sunni orthodoxy, Nawwab Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf Jah<sup>1</sup> (the first of the Nizams of Hyderabad d. 1161/1748).

Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din (d. 12 Zu'lqa'da 1142/29 May 1730) was succeeded by his own son, Fakhru'd Din, who was later known by the title of Maulana (Learned). His mother was a descendant of the family of Saiyid Muhammad Banda Nawaz Gisu Daraz. Fakhru'd-Din was born at Aurangabad in 1126/1714-15.<sup>2</sup> Shah Kalimu'llah was greatly excited when informed of the birth; he named him and sent him a piece of cloth cut from his own garment. Although Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din had an elder son, Muhammad Isma'il, and three sons from another wife, Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, succeeded his father at Aurangabad and later Shah Kalimu'llah at Delhi.

When Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din died, Fakhru'd-Din was sixteen. For the next three years he worked hard completing his religious and literary education and qualifying himself for the title of Maulana which Shah Kalimu'llah had already bestowed on him in his childhood. The following eight years were filled with ascetic exercises, self-mortification and meditation. On occasions, his admirers were intrigued to find Maulana Fakhru'd-Din in a state of ecstasy uttering remarks similar to those made by other mystically intoxicated sufis. By joining the military service under Nawab Nizamu'd-Daula Nasir Jang, the son of Nawwab Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf Jah, he was freed of the attentions of devotees. Now he was able to spend most of his time in prayer and meditation, which he performed in a small tent. His presence in the military camp was a source of great encouragement to the officers and fellow soldiers as the Maulana soon became the confidant of all.<sup>3</sup>

After some years he resigned from the military, returning to life in a *khanqah*. This move resulted in unceasing demands being made by his followers and disciples. Finally he was forced to move from Aurangabad to Delhi in 1165/1751-52 where he believed he would be able to escape unwanted attention. On his journey to Delhi, a Hindu woman approached the caravan in which the Maulana was travelling. Giving a perfect description of the Maulana, she related that her goddess, Bhawani, had told her that just such a man would restore her eyesight. The Maulana assured her that he was but a common soldier and was not trained to

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, f. 4a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 5a.

<sup>3</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, Delhi, 1315/1897-98, pp. 5-6,



perform any miracles. However, some time before the caravan departed, the Maulana prayed for the woman and her eyesight was restored.<sup>1</sup>

After renting a house in the district of Katra-Phulel, Delhi, the Maulana began classes in theology. Soon his fame as a teacher spread to such an extent that often there was a waiting list of potential students. Among his early disciples was a young Panjabi villager, Khwaja Nur Muhammad, who in traditional *pir*-disciple relationship, became profoundly devoted to the Maulana. After some six months the Maulana went to the Panjab accompanied by Khwaja Nur Muhammad and a slave to visit the shrine of Baba Farid at Pak-Pattan (Ajodhan). On his way he visited the tombs of eminent saints at Sonipat, Panipat and Lahore. *En route* he had hired a pony which he refused to ride himself, but would pick up the poor and aged along the way and put them on it. At Ajodhan, where he remained for about two months, he spent long hours in prayer and meditation in a narrow cell near the Baba's tomb.<sup>2</sup>

Returning to Delhi he resumed teaching in his seminary at Katra-Phulel and had a *khanqah* added, although the whole complex was still known as the *madrasa* (seminary) of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din. Even the Emperor, his princes, nobles and the ladies of the royal family became the Maulana's devotees. Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang III<sup>3</sup> the son of Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang II, was another prominent close disciple and life-long admirer of the Maulana's. The latter respected everyone without discrimination and helped the needy and poverty-stricken. He led the funeral prayers for Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar, murdered by a Shi'i assassin. The Ruhilla chief, Nawwab Zabita Khan, was also sincerely devoted to the Maulana and the Chishti shrines.

Emperor Shah 'Alam (1173/1760-1221/1806) urged the Maulana to accept a gift of some villages. Firmly rejecting this offer, the Maulana threatened that if he remained in the town such an offer must never be repeated. Believing his visit to Shah 'Alam to be a violation of Chishti ideals, he organized a big feast for the poor of Delhi in expiation of this sin.<sup>4</sup>

*Sama'* assemblies run by the Maulana were held in defiance of growing Sunni puritanism in Delhi. The movement to suppress *sama'* was led by the Afghans. On numerous occasions these former tribesmen would attempt to disrupt the Maulana's gatherings. One Afghan even entered the Maulana's seminary with the intention of murdering him. According to this story the patience and understanding of the Maulana so disarmed

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup>Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang III, entitled 'Imadu'l-Mulk to distinguish him from his father Amiru'l-Umara' Ghaziu'd-Din Khan Firuz Jang II (Mir Muhammad Panah d. 1165/1722) was the grandson of Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf Jah. *supra*, p. 305.

<sup>4</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, p. 17.



the ruffian and his two accomplices that they decided to become his disciples.<sup>1</sup>

In the Maulana's mystical philosophy the condition of a sufi was compared to that of an inebriate. If a drunkard was calm in the initial stages of intoxication he remained that way until he emerged out of the state, if he was talkative he would continue so as long as he was drunk. Likewise, in the initial stages of mystic intoxication, if a sufi began ranting he would chatter endlessly, losing all control of his senses; if, however, in the early stages he remained disciplined he would remain this way until his death. He thus divided sufis into three categories:

1. Those who had lost both discretion and control.
2. Those who held on to both.
3. Those who had discretion but not control.

Strongly disapproving of a sufic stage in which both discretion and control were lost, the Maulana argued that those who had lost both were unable to understand their own progress, and they had no control over fraudulent mystic impostors. The best stage for a sufi, believed the Maulana, was one that left the sufi with discretion but in which he had no control over himself.<sup>2</sup>

The Maulana was also an ardent supporter of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. According to him mystics who disregarded its principles did not deserve the special name of sufi and should not be entitled to indulge in sufic practices involving the *pir-murid* relationship. Those who were unable to perceive the truth that nothing but the Essence existed could not benefit from sufic discipline.<sup>3</sup> He planned to write a book on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* reorientating the thoughts of Ibn 'Arabi. Like many followers of this philosophy, he believed that people did not correctly understand and misinterpreted Ibn 'Arabi according to their own preconceived notions. The Shaikh's works, he added, should be read in their entirety and it was a great injustice to the author to jump to various conclusions after a few pages.<sup>4</sup>

Fearing popular criticism, the Maulana apparently in the end failed to produce any such book. However, he confidently wrote another work challenging Shah Waliu'llah who, like a number of earlier authors, disputed the belief that the Chishtiyya *silsila* traced back to 'Ali via Hasan Basri. Basing his theory on the standard works of *Hadis*,<sup>5</sup> the Maulana argued that Hasan Basri, who was born in Medina in 21/642, was still living there at the time of the assassination of the third caliph 'Usman in the last days of 35/June 656. According to the Maulana, Hasan Basri

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqib-i Fakhriya*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>2</sup>*Fakhru't-talibin*, pp. 40-41.

<sup>3</sup>*Manaqbu'l-mahbubin*, f. 52.

<sup>4</sup>*Fakhru't-talibin*, pp. 39-40.

<sup>5</sup>*Tarjuma-i Fakhru'l-Hasan*, Delhi, Persian MS., f. 2b.



(d. 110/728) had learnt *Hadis* from 'Ali (b. AD 600 d. 40/661) which he asserted was not unusual for one so young during the early years of Islam. The two met again in Basra.<sup>1</sup> The Maulana added that Shah Wali'ullah's own teacher of *Hadis*, Shaikh Ibrahim Kaurani Kurdi, affirmed the association between the two.<sup>2</sup> At a disciple's suggestion, the Maulana called his work the *Fakhru'l-Hasan*. It was later translated into Persian by another disciple, Kalimu'd-Din Sibghatu'llah.

On 27 Jumada II 1199/7 May 1785, Maulana Fakhru'd-Din died. His only son, Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din was left with his sister in the Deccan. After the Maulana's death, Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din came to Delhi from the Deccan and succeeded his father in the capital. Emperor Muhammad Akbar II (1221/1806-1253/1837) and other Mughal princes and princesses became disciples of Shaikh Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din.<sup>3</sup> After Shaikh Ghulam Qutbu'd-Din's death on 18 Muharram 1233/28 Nov. 1817 his only surviving son, Ghulam Nasiru'n-Din (alias Kale Sahib) became his father's successor. The last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar (1253/1837-1274/1858) and the princes, princesses and nobles at his court, were numbered among his disciples. Both the Delhi élite and common people were greatly devoted to him. On 15 Safar 1262/12 February 1846 Kale Sahib died.<sup>4</sup>

After the Rebellion of 1857-58 Kale Sahib's property in Delhi was confiscated and his sons migrated to Hyderabad and other places. One of these, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din returned a few years later and reorganized the *khanqah* of his father. In 1292/1875-76 he died without any male issue. However his daughter's son and his descendants continued to run the *khanqah* of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din in Delhi.<sup>5</sup>

Maulana Fakhru'd-Din's *khalifas* in the Panjab, Ajmer, Jaipur, Ram-pur and Rai-Bareilly spread the Chishtiyya message throughout their respective regions. The Maulana's most senior disciple was Khwaja Nus Muhammad Muharwi who was the most popular Chishti in the Multan and Sind region.

Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharwi was born on 14 Ramazan 1142/2 April 1730 at Chautala near Muhar in the Bhawalpur district of modern Pakistan.<sup>6</sup> His father and other ancestors were converted Jats whose livelihood was derived from both agriculture and banditry.<sup>7</sup> After the Khwaja's birth, his father (Hanwal) migrated to Muhar from Chautala

<sup>1</sup>*Tarjuma-i Fakhru'l-Hasan*, p. 6b.

ibid, pp. 21b-22a.

<sup>3</sup>Syed Ahmad Khan, *Tazkira-i Ahl-i Dihli*, pp. 25-26.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, pp. 25-27.

<sup>5</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 50-51, 60; Nizami, K.A., *Tarikh-i masha'ikh-i, Chishi*, reprint, Karachi, 1975, pp. 519-21.

<sup>6</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 54.

<sup>7</sup>ibid, p. 87.



and it was there that the Khwaja first memorized the Qur'an and obtained his earliest religious education. Choosing to become an 'alim in preference to the other traditional Jat professions, he studied under teachers in the surrounding villages, and then in the Dera Ghazi Khan district of the Panjab and Lahore.

From Lahore the Khwaja migrated to Delhi where he enrolled as a student in the *madrasa* of Nawab Ghaziu'd-Din Khan. With no regular source of income, either in Lahore or Delhi, he managed to feed himself with the help of gifts. Soon after his arrival in Delhi, Miyan Barkhwur-darji, a teacher in Ghaziu'd-Din's *madrasa* who had taken a keen interest in the Khwaja, left Delhi for his village and the Khwaja was left in great distress. He did, however, retain his interest in learning and good fortune brought him into contact with Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, a recent arrival from the Deccan.<sup>1</sup>

After discovering the mystical talents of the Khwaja and giving him some religious instruction, the Maulana diverted his disciple towards the real forms of sufi training. A few months later he initiated the Khwaja into his discipleship. Together they travelled to Pak-Pattan.<sup>2</sup> After his return to Delhi the Maulana appointed the Khwaja his *khalifa* and asked him to establish the Chishtiyya *silsila* in the Muhar region. Subsequently a *khanqah* was founded by the Shah at Muhar. Thousands of Panjabis from neighbouring villages began to pay homage to the newly established *khanqah* of a fellow-Panjabi and the élite were also soon impressed by the spiritual attainments of the Khwaja.

Like all Chishtiyyas, the teachings of the Khwaja had a strong ethical bias. He advised his disciples to pay special attention to the following:

1. One should not lose one's temper, as rage drives from the heart the illumination of *ma'rifa*
2. If a complaint is made against anyone the accused should not necessarily be treated as guilty
3. Worldly matters should not be discussed.<sup>3</sup>

Serving others was the principal aim of the Khwaja Nur Muhammad's life and he urged his disciples to live amongst the people so as to reform their morals. The Divine Light was also to be experienced in an assembly of ordinary Muslims and therefore a sufi need not necessarily be a recluse. The Khwaja was also responsible for popularising the *sama'* followed by the Chishtis in the Bhawalpur region. Many members of the 'ulama' and Suhrawardiyyas who were hostile to *sama'* were received into the Chishtiyya order through the influence of the Khwaja, later participating in *sama'* rituals themselves. According to the Khwaja, the 'ulama' used

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, p. 306.

<sup>3</sup>*Takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya'*, p. 137.



threatening language in order to help prevent people from committing sins, but it served no purpose.

Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharwi also emphasised that believers in the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* opposed the *Wahdat al-Wujud* in a semantic sense only. Those with a real perception of Unity could not reject the *Wahdat al-Wujud* concept, just as, maintained the Khwaja, those who had seen Lahore or Multan could not then pretend they did not exist.<sup>1</sup>

The Khwaja was totally devoted to his *pir*, Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, and until the latter's death made an annual visit to Delhi remaining with him for some six months every year.<sup>2</sup> His loyalty was reciprocated, and the perfections achieved by the Khwaja were always publicly acknowledged by his *pir*, as was his competence to guide others to God.<sup>3</sup> The death of the Maulana was a great blow to his disciple, who died some six and a half years later on 3 Zu'l-hijja 1205/3 August 1791.<sup>4</sup> His earthly remains were buried at Taj Sarwar, sanctified by the tombs of the descendants of Baba Farid. Of his three sons, the eldest, Shaikh Nuru's-Samad, was killed by his own tribesmen shortly after succeeding to his father. Shaikh Nur Ahmad, the second son of the Khwaja succeeded to his elder brother.

Chishti influence in Bhawalpur, Dera Ghazi Khan and other places in the Panjab and Sind was due to the work of Khwaja Nur Muhammad and his *khalifas*. The most senior among them was Maulana Nur Muhammed Naruwala. His ancestors lived at Hajjipur in Sind but later migrated to Naruwal in the same region. As a Chishti disciple, Maulana Nur Muhammad was an enthusiastic supporter of ecstasy and *sama'*. He could fall into a trance by listening to romantic stories. He believed that the principal difference between the life and death of saints and other people was that when non-sufis were buried their existences ceased, while saints received eternal life. After his death on 6 Jumada I 1204/22 January 1790 he was succeeded by his son, Hafiz Muhammad.<sup>5</sup>

Another leading *khalifa* of Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharwi was Qazi Muhammad 'Aqil. He came from Kot-Mitthan in Dera Ghazi Khan. Born into the '*ulama*' class he was the son of Qazi Muhammad Sharif.<sup>6</sup> In company with his *pir*, Qazi Muhammed 'Aqil called on Maulana Fakhru'd-Din at least three times<sup>7</sup> and they discussed together a number of sufi concepts. The Qazi was well-known for his practice of severe ascetic exercises. He was particularly interested in

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 91-92.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 68-90; *Takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya'*, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 91.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 105-13; *Takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya'*.

<sup>6</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 116-17.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, pp. 110-23; *Takmila-i Siyaru'l-auliya'*, pp. 145-47.



*zikr-i jahr* and his voice was often heard booming it out.<sup>1</sup> He was also an expert in *habs-i dam* (breath control), which he would compare to a snake protecting a treasury. If one was not frightened of the snake the wealth inside could easily be taken.<sup>2</sup>

Qazi Muhammad 'Aqil never relinquished his interest in teaching, combining his seminary with the training of disciples. Along with his books on *Hadis* and *Fiqh*, the Qazi and teachers in his *madrasa* taught the *Ihya' al-'ulum* and the *Fusus al-Hikam*. The *langar* was open to both teachers and students and when *futuh* was abundant the *langar* looked like the interior of a royal kitchen; when not, they all practically starved.<sup>3</sup> Although the Qazi himself ate little, according to the instructions of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, his food and clothing were of fine quality.<sup>4</sup> The Mughal Emperor Akbar II, Bahadur Shah and some princes of the royal blood were also very attached to the Qazi. Qazi Muhammad 'Aqil was well-known for his courtesy, humanity and serenity. On 8 Rajab 1229/26 June 1814 he died<sup>5</sup> and was succeeded by his son.

Hafiz Muhammad Jamal Multani was also an eminent *khalifa* of Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharwi. He was acknowledged to be the most brilliant 'alim of his age. After some time he became interested in sufism and began praying and meditating at the tomb of Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din Multani, drawing inspiration from the spirit of the saint. Later he became the disciple of Khwaja Nur Muhammad and accompanied him when he visited Maulana Fakhru'd-Din in Delhi. The Maulana was also highly impressed with Hafiz Muhammad Jamal and, on his *pir's* suggestion, Khwaja Nur Muhammad sent Hafiz Muhammad Jamal to initiate disciples at Multan, formerly the exclusive domain of the descendants of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya and his disciples. In the *khanqah* of Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya himself, Hafiz Muhammad Jamal initiated Maulwi Khuda Bakhsh Multani, an eminent Suhrawardiyya, into the Chishtiyya order.<sup>6</sup>

It was commonly believed that as long as Hafiz Muhammad Jamal lived, the Sikh invaders would find it impossible to conquer Multan. Whenever the Sikh army approached Multan the Hafiz, bow and arrow in hand, led the defence of the fort. An expert archer he would pass on his skill to his disciples. His leadership and known spiritual power reinforced the strength of the besieged and inevitably the Sikh forces retreated.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Takmil-i Siyarul-'auliya'*, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, p. 149.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, p. 144.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p. 155.

<sup>6</sup> *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 126-27.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, pp. 126-27, 131, 137.



Hafiz Muhammad Jamal advised his disciples to adorn their external life with the Shari'a and purify their inner selves from evil and immorality. He also disapproved of the prevailing custom of endogamy adhered to by many Saiyids.<sup>1</sup> On 5 Jumada I 1226/28 May 1811 the Hafiz died and was buried in Multan. One of his *khalifas*, Khuda Bakhsh Multani, was a scholar and a popular mystic.<sup>2</sup>

Among other *khalifas* of Khwaja Nur Muhammad who achieved some fame both in the Panjab and Afghanistan was Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman of Taunsa (some 60 miles from Dera Ghazi Khan). He was born in 1184/1770-71 in the village of Garhgoji, near Taunsa and belonged to the Ja'fariyya branch of the Afghan tribe. His father, Zakariyya bin 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, died when he was an infant and his upbringing and education were undertaken by his mother. After reading some of the Qur'an with a village Mulla, he went to Taunsa. His teacher, Miyan Hasan 'Ali, ordered his pupil either to beg for his food or earn it labouring. As Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman rejected both paths, the Miyan was forced to accept him as his guest as well as his pupil, and taught him the Qur'an, this time all the way through.<sup>3</sup> His education was also expanded by teachers in Langh, a neighbouring village, and then at Kot-Mitthan in the seminary of Qazi Muhammad 'Aqil.

Education as an '*alim* turned Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman into a keen supporter of the *Shari'a*. In his zealously he decided to thwart Khwaja Nur Muhammad in his *sama'* gatherings. After seeing the latter, however, he became infatuated with him and decided to become his disciple. Early in 1199/1784, at his *pir's* suggestion he went to Delhi via Uch, Ajmer, Jaipur and Rewari, but by the time he arrived Maulana Fakhru'd-Din was already dead. The Khwaja deeply mourned the immeasurable loss of his *pir's* *pir*.<sup>4</sup> After his return to Muhar he began a vigorous round of prayer, *pas-i anfas* and *zikh-i jahr*.<sup>5</sup>

When Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman established his own *khanqah* in a hut there, Taunsa was a tiny village. His presence soon turned it into a large town. The Khwaja continued to lecture advanced students and to discuss with a select few the works of Ibn 'Arabi. It is said that Diwan Kirparam, the Sikh administrator of Raja Ranjit Singh was greatly impressed by a lecture given by the Khwaja on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He also attracted a number of Sikh religious mendicants by giving some convincing replies to questions relating to Divine love and union with God in support of the Unity of Being.<sup>6</sup> On one occasion a Sikh holy

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 130.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 140.

<sup>3</sup>Maulawi Ilaah Bakhsh Baluchi, *Khatam-i Sulaimani*, Lahore, 1325/1907-8, pp. 21-26.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 31-34; *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 156-57.

<sup>5</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, p. 164.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 227.



man, armed with a sword and accompanied by a dozen or so fierce-looking disciples, visited the Khwaja, seating himself on his prayer carpet. Although the Khwaja's disciples were somewhat apprehensive about the new arrivals, when the Sikh mentioned that he had just come from the Tila Jogi Bal Gonda'i, the Khwaja, remembering the stories set there of the love between Hir and Ranjha, fell into a deeply ecstatic state. In a later discussion with the Sikh the Khwaja stated that union with God was obtained by Divine grace alone and that asceticism was insignificant in comparison. He also believed that the *Shari'a* was superior in influence to sufism, for '*alims* had the power to execute mystics while not a single '*alim* in the past had suffered similarly at the hands of a sufi.<sup>1</sup>

Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman was an articulate debater whose audience found him both humorous and convincing. The militant puritanism of Saiyid Ahmad of Rae Bareli, reinforced by the popularity of Shah 'Abdu'l-Aziz, had made a considerable stir in Delhi and as far as the Panjab and the north-west frontier. The followers of these two, known as Wahhabis, contended that prophets and sufi saints could neither benefit nor harm anyone. When asked his opinion of this claim by an opponent of the militant puritans, the Khwaja calmly replied that indeed sufi saints had no power, as every action they performed was in fact the work of God.<sup>2</sup>

The Khwaja urged his disciples to improve their own morals, stressing that although people were endowed with the physical form of men, they were not really men in the ethical sense. Although these standards were clearly laid down in the *Silku's-Suluk* of Ziya'u'd-Din Nakhshabi, they were so high that even he (the Shah) himself was unable to fulfil them all.<sup>3</sup> Humility, unpretentiousness and modesty were, according to the Khwaja, indispensable qualities for all men, and he believed that the most humble were God's favourites. Sufis should show charity to everyone irrespective of their virtues and vices. Instead of becoming critical of others, they should examine their own strengths and weaknesses. He also castigated those who mistreated animals.<sup>4</sup> Wheat merchants who hoarded wheat to sell it later during scarcity were also decried.<sup>5</sup> He urged the '*ulama*' to take special interest in the study of *Fiqh* and Qur'anic exegesis and to follow sincerely the *Sunna* of the Prophet.<sup>6</sup> Sufis were also urged by Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman to realize that all Divine actions were based on some form of knowledge and wisdom although it might appear hidden. The deep concern of sufis for their faith should be

<sup>1</sup> *Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 288-89.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup> Maulana Imamu'd-Din, *Nafi'u's-salikin*, Lahore, 1285/1868-69, p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, p. 107.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p. 158.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*, p. 135.



so great that never for a single moment should God be forgotten.<sup>1</sup> No mystical incantation was superior to the *zikr-i jahr* and he believed sufis should not waste their time with thaumaturgics.<sup>2</sup> A modest house, simple food, clothing and water were all that was necessary for the survival of sufis as for others, and their possession should not be considered worldly. Mysticism was not to be pursued by materialists, while mystics should devote their time to praying and working for the welfare of others.<sup>3</sup>

According to Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman, Chishtiyya traditions included Hindus and Muslims living in peace and harmony together. This was reinforced by the following verse of Hafiz:

O Hafiz should you wish Divine union you should be at peace with both the élite and common people,

You should say 'Allah Allah' to a Muslim and 'Rama Rama' to a Hindu.<sup>4</sup>

However, the Khwaja urged mystics to abstain from the company of the *bad-mazhaban* (irreligious) and to forego whatever worldly benefits emanated from their company, choosing a life of abject poverty.<sup>5</sup> Although he did not define '*bad-mazhaban*' he certainly meant the mu'tazila and of course, Shi'is.

On 7 Safar 1267/12 December 1850 Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman died, aged about eighty-four. The impact of his many years' teaching and his great reputation for sanctity helped to resuscitate the Chishtiyya *silsila* in India during the nineteenth century. By the time of his death his disciples were spread throughout the entire sub-continent.

The most important of the Khwaja's *khalifas* was Hafiz Saiyid Muhammad 'Ali Khairabadi (b. 1192/1778-79). His ancestors were among the spiritual descendants of Shah Mina of Lucknow.<sup>6</sup> Hafiz Saiyid Muhammad 'Ali's father, Shamsu'd-Din, was an '*alim*'. His own early education was received in Khairabad and Shahjahanpur after which he moved to Delhi and studied under Shah 'Abdu'l-Qadir. By then he had developed an interest in sufism and he began performing severe ascetic exercises at the shrine of Khwaja Qutbu'd-Din Bakhtiyar Kaki. During the following years he was in Ajmer, then Pak-Pattan and later Taunsa. There he embarked on a series of even more severe exercises under the guidance of Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman. Later he became a *khalifa* who was permitted to initiate disciples. Hafiz Muhammad 'Ali then went to Mecca and Medina where he remained for some ten years.

Returning to India he established a *khanqah* at Khairabad. He travelled frequently to Delhi, Lucknow and Hyderabad initiating disciples *en route*.

<sup>1</sup>Nafi'u's-salikin, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 58, 74.

<sup>3</sup>Manaqibu'l-mahbubin, p. 321.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, p. 131.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, p. 176.

<sup>6</sup>HSI, p. 273.



His long stay in Arabia had made him passionately fond of the more pure aspects of Islam and he refused to be associated with such things as traditional marriage customs or mourning ceremonies and so on, believing them to be sacrilegious. He also discouraged the Chishti practice of kissing the feet of a *pir* and of prostration before him, likening it to similar Hindu practices.<sup>1</sup>

The Hafiz was deeply interested in the '*Awarif al-Ma'arif*. He also lectured on the *Masnawi* of Maulana Rumi which was popular with Hindus.<sup>2</sup> The works of Ibn 'Arabi and Maulana Jami were also taught to senior disciples. The eminent Maulana Fazl-i Haqq Khairabadi (b. 1211/1796-97 d. 1862) was among those who received instruction from the Hafiz on the *Fusus al-Hikam*. Nevertheless he discouraged ordinary people from discussing the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and advocated that sufi mysteries were not for public discussion and should be well guarded. After the Hafiz died in Zu'lqa'da 1266/September-October 1850 his leading *khalifas* chose to live and work in Hyderabad. One of these, Maulana Ahsanu'z-Zaman, was an excellent scholar of Arabic, and wrote a detailed commentary on the *Fakhru'l Hasan* of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din.<sup>3</sup>

A *khalifa* of Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman established a *khanqah* at Shaikhawati in Rajasthan. He was Hajji Najmu'd-Din who was born on 3 Ramazan 1234/26 June 1819 in Jhunjhun near Jaipur. At the early age of twenty Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman appointed the Hajji his *khalifa* before sending him into the wilderness of Shaikhawati. Living as a hermit he soon attracted the attention of local Muslims and Hindus from Rajasthan. A prolific writer in both Persian and Urdu he also used freely Rajasthani words and phrases. Many of his works were treatises on the teachings of sufi *pirs* of the Chishtiyya order and some were didactic in themselves. He also composed mystical poems in Urdu and Rajasthani about the *Wahdat al-Wujud* which are particularly touching. Hajji Najmu'd-Din died on 19 Ramazan 1287/13 December 1870.<sup>4</sup> His *khalifas*, who established their *khanqahs* in all the important towns of Rajasthan, managed to revive the Chishtiyya glory of the days of Khwaja Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri.

Siyal in the Panjab was the site of the *khanqah* of Khwaja Shamsu'd-Din Siyalwi, a favourite *khalifa* of Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman. Khwaja Shamsu'd-Din was born in 1214/1799-1800. At a very young age he became Khwaja Muhammad Sulaiman's disciple, and was appointed *khalifa* at the age of thirty-six. His *khanqah* at Siyal was a rendez-

<sup>1</sup>Ghulam Muhammad Hadi 'Ali Khan Chishti Kashmiri, *Manaqib-i Hafiziya*, Kanpur, 1305/1888, p. 111, 178, 187.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, p. 211.

<sup>3</sup>*Tarikh-i masha'ikh-i Chisht*, pp. 682-83.

<sup>4</sup>*Manaqibu'l-mahbubin*, pp. 369-75.



vous for both sufis and ordinary travellers who were never turned away hungry. On 21 Safar 1300/1 January 1883 he died, survived by more than thirty *khalifas* who in turn established their own *khanqahs* throughout the Panjab and Kashmir.<sup>1</sup>

Although Khwaja Nur Muhammad Muharwi and his disciples concentrated on spreading their order through Rajasthan, the Panjab and environs, other parts of India were not deprived of the missionary zeal of the *khalifas* of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din either. Of these the most important was Shah Niyaz Ahmad. He was born at Sirhind in 1173/1759-60. His father died when he was very young and his mother cared for his education. After its completion at Sirhind he moved to Delhi at the age of seventeen and specialized in various branches of knowledge under Maulana Fakhru'd-Din. For some time he worked as a teacher, and then, complying with the Maulana's instructions, established a *khanqah* at Bareilly in Western U.P. He wrote a number of treatises on sufism but above all excelled in Arabic and Persian verses. It was in Urdu, however, that his ideas on sufism were most ingeniously and delicately expressed. The *Wahdat al-Wujud* was his favourite topic and he often expressed the idea that the Lord of the Ka'ba and the idol temple were one and the same.<sup>2</sup>

On 6 Jumada II 1250/10 October 1834 Shah Niyaz Ahmad died. His successor was his eldest son, Shah Nizamu'd-Din. An important disciple of Shah Niyaz was Miskin Shah Sahib (d. 28 Jumada I 1275/3 January 1859). From Kishtwar in Jammu Kashmir, he was initiated into the Qadiriyya and the Naqshbandiyya orders and finally became the disciple of Shah Niyaz Ahmad. At his *pir's* suggestion he established a *khanqah* in Jaipur. Shah Nizamu'd-Din's *khalifas* also founded *khanqahs* in U.P. and the Panjab.<sup>3</sup>

Saiyid Sikandar 'Ali a *khalifa* of Miskin Shah Sahib, became famous in Allahabad. He was born in c. 1229/1813-14 in a village near Allahabad to which he later moved. After establishing a *khanqah* in Allahabad he persistently advocated the principles of Unity of Being, arguing that the credo of the opposing *Wahdat al-Shuhud* was an invention of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. The Saiyid asserted that prior to the time of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (the Mujaddid) members of the Naqshbandiyya order had followed the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, but afterwards they began to adhere to it even more tenaciously. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi emphasized the marked duality of the relationship between man and God and stated that the theory of *Hama Ust* (All is He) obliterated the distinctive characteristics

<sup>1</sup>*Tarikh-i masha'ikh-i Chisht*, pp. 702-8.

<sup>2</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya*, I, pp. 512-13; Ghulam Hamadani Mushafi, *Riyazu'l-fusaha*, Delhi, 1934, p. 259.

<sup>3</sup>*Tarikh-i masha'ikh-i Chishti*, pp. 571-74.



of the transcendence of God. An overwhelmingly large number, however, endorsed the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the Saiyid claimed somewhat proudly. According to them, 'All is He', and 'other than He' were inconceivable.<sup>1</sup>

Saiyid Sikandar added that, according to the *Shari'a*, the Divine attributes are neither the 'ayn of the Essence nor are they different from the Essence. However, he continued, to the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the attributes are the 'ayn of the Essence and the Essence is the 'ayn of the attributes. Moreover, the attribute is not distinguishable from the Essence nor is the Essence distinguishable from the attributes. To the objection that if one believed that 'All is He', prayers, worship, meditation, virtues and vices were meaningless, the Saiyid replied that these were a means of differentiating fiction from truth. Praying and worship destroyed vice, producing virtue and enabling the worshipper to rise steadily in the realm of spirituality and to become united with Reality. Only true gnostics, the Saiyid affirmed, were human; the rest, although disguised as men, were animals. He illustrated his point with a charming anecdote about a female saint who habitually wandered about the streets of Delhi completely naked. Once, when she caught sight of Maulana Fakhru'd-Din, she immediately dressed herself, explaining that her private parts could not remain exposed in the company of a man, and that the Maulana was the only man with whom she had come in contact.<sup>2</sup> The Saiyid confirmed that in the initial stages of their training sufis were called on to sever their relations with the world, but when they achieved perfection there was no longer need to make any effort. Divine light now came instinctively to them and their backs were automatically turned against the world.<sup>3</sup>

Saiyid Sikandar 'Ali reminded sufis to be strict in their adherence to the *Shari'a*; it was the only refuge if they failed in the mystical *Tariqa*. He frequently quoted his *pir* who compared *sama'* to the occasional necessary dose of medicine but prohibited its excessive indulgence.<sup>4</sup>

The Saiyid adhered faithfully to the ancient practices connected with the Hanafiyya form of worship, rejecting the Wahhabi reforms. He also advocated visits to tombs of saints for the purpose of prayer. He claimed that a Wahhabi '*alim* from India had visited Mecca but had refused to continue on to Medina (the burial place of the Prophet), believing visits to tombs to be sinful innovations and therefore unlawful. To the Saiyid this '*alim* was not only ignorant of the Hanafiyya traditions recommending the efficacy of visits to such tombs, but deprived himself of the grace and good-will of the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad emanating from his

<sup>1</sup>Azmat 'Ali Siddiqi, *Malfuzat-i Maulana Saiyid, Sikandar 'Ali*, Allahabad, 1317/1889-1900, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 5-6.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, p. 8.



tomb.<sup>1</sup> The followers of the Saiyid were also urged to respect Saiyids (descendants of the Prophet Muhammad through his daughter, Fatima), arguing that sectarian differences should not be allowed to interfere with such a duty.

On 14 Rabi' I 1297/25 February 1880 Saiyid Sikandar 'Ali died with his place in the history of the Chishtiyya order in India well secured.

<sup>1</sup>*Malfuzat-i Maulana Saiyid, Sikandar 'Ali*, p. 37.



## Chapter Six

### Indian Sufis and the Medieval Islamic World

**B**ETWEEN the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries the fame of Indian sufis aroused great interest in the contemporary Islamic world, thanks to the efforts of merchants and pilgrims who spread a multitude of stories relating to Indian sufis.<sup>1</sup> From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries Indian sufis settled in Mecca, Medina, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Central Asia and South-East Asia where they disseminated their own ideas and practices. This migration was mainly the result of improved facilities to Arabia on Portuguese and Dutch ships. Not only did the rate of pilgrims increase but Indian sufis and theologians could now begin establishing close contacts with sufis and scholars throughout the whole Islamic world. Many of the Indians who settled in Mecca and Medina started their own schools. Although those who attended were mystics and scholars from many parts of the Islamic world, it was with those from non-Arabic speaking countries that the Indians proved most popular.

A remarkable impact on both the population of Mecca and Medina and the many visitors who flocked to these pilgrimage centres was made by Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi and his disciple, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Muttaqi. The former's ancestors were from Jaunpur, while he himself was born at Burhanpur in 885/1480-81.<sup>2</sup> When he was either seven or eight years old, his father, Shaikh Husamu'd-Din, the son of 'Abdu'l-Malik and the grandson of Qazi Khan al-Muttaqi, took 'Ali Muttaqi to Shah Bajan Chishti Burhanpuri in order to make him his disciple. Soon after Shaikh Husamu'd-Din died and the young 'Ali's education was supervised by his mother and relatives.

As a youth, 'Ali Muttaqi joined the court of the Sultans of Mandu and became wealthy. Soon his ecstatic tendencies prompted him to renounce the world and adopt sufism. He obtained initiation into the Chishtiyya order from Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hakim<sup>3</sup> (the son of Shaikh Bajan), securing from him also a *khirqah* of *khilafat* (succession). However his piety and abstinence, the main features of his personality, remained

<sup>1</sup>HSI, pp. 277-78.

<sup>2</sup>AA, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup>supra, p. 284.



unsatisfied by the routine of the Chishtiyya *khanqah* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Hakim. After a move to Multan he began practising austere ascetic exercises under Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Muttaqi,<sup>1</sup> for about two years he also studied the *Tafsir Baizawi* and the *Kitab 'Avn al-ilm* under his new *pir*. Apparently Shaikh Husamu'd-Din highly respected Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi for his personal qualities and would humbly bring him books. If Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi admitted him to his cell they would discuss various subtle intellectual and mystical problems. If the Shaikh refused to allow him in Shaikh Husamu'd-Din would not demand entry.<sup>2</sup>

Some time later Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi left Multan to seek other *pirs*. His provisions included two bags, one filled with rice, lentils, flour, butter, oil, salt and cooking utensils and the other containing the Qur'an and some important books including the *'Avn al-ilm* to which he often referred. He rarely stayed in mosques but would rent small houses when remaining for any length of time in a town. After collecting fuel in the jungle he would cook enough food to last for some days. As he got older he ate so little that one portion of cooked food would last five to six days. Wandering from one place to the next, he lived in the jungle, concentrating on methods to achieve purification and piety. No-one was allowed to wait on him, for he considered having servants an act of dependence on someone other than God. Only with great reluctance did he allow Sadr Hasan, one of his family servants, who had refused to leave him to remain.

During his travels, Shaikh 'Ali visited Gujarat. By then he was widely known and wherever he went he was mobbed by devotees striving to catch a glimpse of him. Most of the time he spent behind locked doors. However in order to satisfy some of his visitors, his servant would go inside the house and return with feigned blessings from the Shaikh. Only at a congregational prayers was it possible to see him and that only from some distance. Periodically Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi would leave his cell to go into the jungle for prayer and meditation.

In Gujarat, prompted by divine inspiration, the Shaikh wrote a treatise on mysticism. In Ahmadabad he married in order to fulfil the obligations of the Sunna of the Prophet. After fathering a child which died in infancy,

<sup>1</sup>Shaikh Husamu'd-Din Muttaqi was an *'alim* and ascetic. He did not live on gifts and state grants but worked as a cultivator, paying *kharaj* revenue like the rest of the Hindu cultivators. He refused to accept an agricultural plot, paying the lower rate of (*'ushr*) as other Muslim holy men and their supporters did, besides enjoying free-hold (*madad-i ma'ash*) land. During the periods of frequent changes in the rates of *kharaj*, the Shaikh along with the Hindu cultivators cheerfully suffered hardships and did not accept anything without paying for it. It is said that he did not stand near the tomb of the celebrated Suhrawardiyya *pir*, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya, because he considered it a sacrilege that state funds had been used to build it (AA, p. 214).

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haq Muhaddis, *Zadu'l-muttaqin*, Rampur MS., f. 4b; AA, p. 257.



he decided to divorce his wife for the child would be able to intercede for them on the Day of Judgment and he had completed the duties required by the *Sunna* regarding the marriage. His wife asked that she be permitted to remain with him and serve him. Some of her relations also became Shaikh 'Ali's disciples, later building him a *khanqah* and mosque outside the Shahpur gate in Ahmadabad.

Sultan Bahadur (932/1526-943/1537) of Gujarat decided to call on Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi during his stay in the province. However he was not granted an interview. Qazi 'Abdu'llah Sindi, a friend of the Shaikh's who had lived in Mecca and Medina and was a well-known saint, pressed him to grant the request and offered to engage the Sultan in conversation should the Shaikh not wish to speak. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi replied that he would be unable to restrain himself from asking the Sultan why he did not wear clothes stipulated by the *Shari'a* and live according to its tenets. The Sultan eventually did call and listened patiently to the Shaikh's lecturing him, later sending him a huge amount of money which he promptly passed on to the Qazi.<sup>1</sup>

After the defeat of Sultan Bahadur by Humayun in 942/1536 Shaikh 'Ali felt it expedient to leave Ahmadabad for Mecca. In Surat he and his companions were joined by Qazi 'Abdu'llah. When the Governor of Dil became aware of their presence he gave them accommodation in his fort. After the defeated Sultan Bahadur arrived there he attributed his defeat to the heavy casualties suffered by his own Muslim followers in the war against the Mughals. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi maintained an uncommitted silence and a few days later quietly sailed for Mecca.

In the Islamic Holy Land Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi entered the discipleship of Shaikh Abu'l-Hasan Bakri of Diyar Bakr, a famous and gifted sufi. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi thrived in the stimulating company of the many theologians and mystics he met there. Shaikh Muhammad bin Muhammad bin al-Sakhawi initiated him as a Qadiriya, Shaziliyya and Madyaniyya,<sup>2</sup> making him a *khalifa* and awarding him a *khirqah* in all three. In the reign of Sultan Mahmud (943/1537-961/1554) he temporarily returned to Gujarat. Finally he made another trip to Mecca where he dedicated himself permanently to study, writing and teaching.

Both as a teacher of *Hadis* and *Fiqh* and as a sufi *pir*, the methods chosen by Shaikh 'Ali were unusual. His training method started with his disciples transcribing manuscripts with ink he had manufactured himself. He would acquire books which were rare in the Arabian peninsula, then have them copied and given to other scholars. Often he paid high prices for finely copied manuscripts and felt obliged to the scribes for offering them to him.<sup>3</sup> The acquisition of books became an insatiable passion with him. Once, when attempting to acquire a copy of

<sup>1</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, f. 66; AA, p. 260.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, p. 85-86.

<sup>3</sup>AA, p. 261.



the *Mawahib Laduniya* which was owned by a Meccan *Faqih*, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi did not possess the twenty *Ibrahimi* needed. He attempted to borrow the money from Asaf Khan, a vizier visiting from Gujarat, although previously he had refused to allow him to call on him. Asaf Khan did not have the full amount and offered to arrange it for the Shaikh. Impatiently Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi called on another non-Arab merchant, borrowed the money and acquired the manuscript, paying one-third more than was quoted. He had several copies made and sent one to Gujarat. Further copies were made from this in India, and in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the work became famous in the sub-continent.<sup>1</sup>

Until incapacitated by old age, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi earned his living by copying manuscripts. Later when officers and grandees of the Sultan of Turkey became Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's devotees, he received huge amounts in *futuh* (gifts). Stipends were also assigned to dervishes and other deserving people dependent on the Shaikh.<sup>2</sup> Even the resources of Turkey were insufficient to meet the needs of the Shaikh's charities. Frequently he borrowed money from merchants to support Muslim widows, and asserted that regular repayment encouraged more donations of *futuh*. He made a practice of distributing meals at the 'urs (death anniversaries) of eminent *pirs* of different orders. In his old age, however, Shaikh 'Ali-Muttaqi preferred to pay cash to dervishes for he found the preparation of the food and the crowds that gathered on such occasions a great nuisance. In his *khanqah* there was never any adequate provision of food, and so only the most devoted disciples would live with him, the others finding themselves more comfortable accommodation elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

As mentioned previously, the Shaikh ate little food and developed the habit of mixing water with delicious food with the express purpose of spoiling its taste. One of the Shaikh's servants was particularly boorish and a notoriously bad cook. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi tolerated such discomforts cheerfully. On one occasion he was given bitter soup. The Shaikh invited his servant to eat some too. Somewhat shocked by the taste of his own concoction, the servant told his master that he could eat it any way. Mixing water with the soup the Shaikh ate a little.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi was gifted as a teacher of the exoteric knowledge of 'ulama' and as a highly ascetic sufi. He made it a practice never to discuss *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) and the aphorisms uttered by sufis while in a state of ecstasy. He also never publicly referred to the mystical statements of Ibn 'Arabi even neglecting to quote him when explaining portions of the sufi commentary on the Qur'an, the *Bahr al-Haq'iq*, by Najm Daya (d. 656/1258), which was based on Ibn 'Arabi's views on

<sup>1</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, ff. 14b-16a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, ff. 17b-18a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 19a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, ff. 16b-17a.



the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. His attitude to *sama'* was a moderate one but like all Chishtiyyas he was deeply moved by it.<sup>1</sup> Once, in Mecca, under the influence of a trance he went into an ecstatic condition and, although sick, rushed to the Ka'ba, where he pronounced himself to be the Mahdi. As it was Friday and a large crowd had gathered, his announcement had a stunning impact. After an audience with Asaf Khan Gujarati and Shaikh Abu'l-Hassan Bakri, which he had sought to inform them of his new status, the latter was greatly impressed with the Shaikh's condition, which seemed to reinforce his claim. His next destination was the palace of the representative of the Sultan of Turkey but he postponed his visit there and returned to his own house and fell asleep only to find on waking that he was normal again. He immediately recanted.

After this experience, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi became a confirmed enemy of the Indian Mahdawis<sup>2</sup> who accepted Saiyid Muhammad of Jaunpur as a Mahdi. He rejected their treatises which supported this claim on the basis of the Saiyid, like himself, being greatly under the influence of ecstasy. Some time during the reign of Sultan Mahmud of Gujarat; he travelled from Mecca to Gujarat to try to undermine the movement.

The Mahdawis in India were convinced neither by the Shaikh's outpourings nor by the *fatwas* (legal decrees) issued by the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina which the Shaikh carried with him to strengthen his case. They countered with other treatises refuting the works of the Shaikh and nicknamed him *Muftari* (Liar), to rhyme with Muttaqi (Pious). The Mahdawi influence in Gujarat so disturbed Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi that he returned to Mecca in disgust.

According to the *Zadu'l-muttaqin* the Shaikh classed methods for training sufis in two categories. The first entailed disciples rejecting all former habits. The *pirs* in the second category ignored the previous way of life of their disciples, managing through example gradually to reform them. They believed that a long association with the pious changed the nature of novice sufis. This was the traditional Chishtiyya method of training which Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi himself followed. As mentioned, the Shaikh engaged his own disciples in copying and collating manuscripts. Initially they felt themselves to be exploited; after some time, however, they became influenced by the mystical atmosphere in which they worked and their spiritual condition changed. Only after about a year were they instructed in *zikr*, meditation, contemplation and ascetic exercises and advised to spend their time in spiritual retreat.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi did not honour his disciples with sufi *khirqas*; instead he advised them to hang a bag around their necks which hung down their left sides. The bag had five internal partitions. There was one

<sup>1</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, ff. 15b-16a.

<sup>2</sup>*MRM*, pp. 68-106.

<sup>3</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, ff. 33b. 36a.



very large one with two on its right side and two smaller ones on top of it. In them were stored a grave cloth, camphor and sweet herbs used to anoint dead bodies. The bag was given the Hindi name *jholi* (bag) and, as one might guess, was intended to remind the disciple that 'in life one is in the midst of death'. When he first began the practice the Shaikh suggested that his disciples inscribe the word 'death' on the bags: later this practice was dropped. He alluded to the significance of this bag in a number of works.

After Safar 975/August-Sept. 1567 signs of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's approaching death became apparent. He was however, in such an ecstatic state that he still had a great degree of physical strength. His *zikr-i jahr* (loud *zikr*) was conducted in a voice which belied his true weakness. The verses his disciple Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab recited stimulated him to spend hours talking about mystical love. One meal time when the food was being broken into pieces and mixed together with soup the Shaikh ordered it to be done according to the description in the following Hindi *doha* (verse)

*Sun Saheli prm ke bata*

*Yun mil rahiye jiun dudh nabata*

O beloved! listen to conversations about love

And mix together as sugar is mixed with milk.

Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi finally died on 2 Jumada 975/4 November 1567.<sup>1</sup>

A prolific writer throughout his lifetime, Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi reputedly wrote more than one hundred books, a large number of them being short treatises. His magnum opus however, was an encyclopaedia of *Hadis*, the *Khaz al-'Ummal*. It was an attempt to rearrange in alphabetical order the *ahadis* compiled by Jalalu'd-Din Abu'l-Fazl 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Abi Bakr bin Muhammad's as-Suyuti (d. 911/1505) in his *Jama' al-Jawamu* or *Jami'al-Musnad*. This was done using the chapter-headings of the works on *Fiqh*. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's work was designed to facilitate consultation of these traditions by *Faqihs*, and is still recognized as a masterly contribution. His own teacher, Shaikh Abu'l-Hasan al-Bakri, welcomed his pupil's outstanding contribution to the knowledge of *Hadis* with the comment that Suyuti's *Jama' al-Jawami'* was a gift to the world, but Suyuti himself should be greatly indebted to the author of this new arrangement.<sup>2</sup>

Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Muhammad bin 'Ali bin Hajar of Mahalat Abi'l Haitam in al-Gharabiya (Egypt), a distinguished Shafi'i jurist who had settled in Mecca in 924/1518-19 and lived there until his death on 23 Rajab 974/3 February 1567, was another of Shaikh 'Ali's teachers. Despite his extensive knowledge he found the *Kanz al-'Ummal*

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 264-65.

<sup>2</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, f. 11a.



a most useful reference work, and invariably consulted the classifications of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Ali-Muttaqi was recognized during his lifetime as a great sufi by the Arab world and a distinguished scholar of *Hadis*. His disciples spread from the Yemen to Syria and from Gujarat to the Deccan. His successor was an Indian, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab al-Muttaqi al-Qadiri, who joined him in Jumada 1563/March-April 1556, aged about twenty.<sup>2</sup> Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab was probably born in 943/1536-37 in Mandu. During his childhood, 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and his father Shaikh Waliu'llah moved to Burhanpur during some sort of political upheaval which Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's biographer and disciple, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, does not mention. The trip was apparently made in highly impecunious circumstances. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab and his father travelled through the jungle by foot. Practically starving, they sometimes spent their nights sitting in trees to protect themselves from wild animals. Shaikh Waliu'llah never faltered and his determination helped raise his son's spirits.<sup>3</sup>

After they settled in Burhanpur Shaikh Waliu'llah's wife joined them, but he died shortly afterwards. By this time 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's desire for a spiritual life and his passion for study and travel, inspired by his father, was deeply implanted. Shortly after his father's death his mother also passed away.

'Abdu'l-Wahhab chose the life of an itinerant dervish. From Gujarat and the Deccan accompanied by a small party he travelled to Malabar and then to Ceylon. Nowhere did he remain for more than a few days unless the company of some eminent '*alim* and the urge to improve his religious knowledge detained him. The group made it a practice not to beg food from the local population, surviving on discarded butcher's bones and wheat grains which they collected in the fields and made into a soup.

During the journey the travellers had a number of interesting experiences, including a meeting at Malabar with a yogi ascetic to whom had been attributed great miraculous powers. He claimed he could see a fort made of gold and invited them to enter it by performing certain thaumaturgical exercises. Crowds of men and women gathered with offerings of food and money but the yogi refused to accept either. But he listened attentively to the preaching by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's party, and the Shaikh was later to claim that their impact had made the yogi a true Muslim, prompting him to forget his fort of gold.<sup>4</sup> The story is a stock-in-trade tale, popular around the time of the 14th century of confrontation between sufis and yogis, with the inevitable ending in a Muslim victory.

<sup>1</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, f. 12a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 255-76.

<sup>2</sup>*AA*, pp. 269-70.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 277.



From Ceylon or Malabar Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab seems to have travelled to Mecca in a merchant ship. By the time he reached the holy town he had acquired sufficient religious education to act as an *'alim* and he was skilled as a calligrapher. Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi saw in Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab not only a fellow countryman but a promising mind likely to be an asset to his own mystical mission. He invited Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab to stay and, as was his custom, to help him copy manuscripts. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab was undecided. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq the impact of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's remarkable spiritual powers and scholarship finally prompted Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab to accept the invitation. He was remained of his father's advice that he should not associate with saints who were involved with the *Da'wat-i asma'* and in influencing rulers; probably Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq was referring in this story to the Shattariyya saints, Shaikh Bahlul and his brother, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus, for Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's father had advised his son to become the disciple of such sufis as Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab decided to grasp the opportunity presented and remain with Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab was an expert in Persian *masta'liq*.<sup>2</sup> On his teacher's advice, however, he began practising the Arabic *naskh*<sup>3</sup> in which the Qur'an had been copied. Soon he became an expert in writing *naskh* and spent a great deal of time copying Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi's drafts and collating them with the original. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq illustrated Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's devotion to his *pir* by telling of how, when an urgent copy of a manuscript of 12,000 verses was needed, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab in addition to his normal work completed the manuscript in twelve days, copying 1,000 verses each night.<sup>4</sup>

Until the day of his death, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab remembered his teacher's advice to choose a dervish's life of poverty in preference to any other alternative. With the exception of a brief visit to Gujarat after the death of Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab remained in Mecca. According to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq he went to Gujarat to settle some business connected with his family's property; however, it is possible that in reality this visit may have been to start a campaign against the Mahdawis. They were certainly expecting the Shaikh and continually pestered him with awkward questions in debates. At Ahmadabad his house was surrounded by a Mahdawi mob and he only managed to escape by jumping the wall.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the most miraculous feat attributed to

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup>A kind of Persian writing popular in the Indian sub-continent.

<sup>3</sup>The bold, erect writing in which the Qur'an is usually inscribed. Modern Arabic print is generally called *naskh*.

<sup>4</sup>AA, p. 269.

<sup>5</sup>*Zadu'l-muttaqin*, ff. 55b.



Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab was his forty days' journey by boat from Mecca to Gujarat and the sixteen days' return journey. After leaving Mecca he was back there in time to perform the next year's pilgrimage on 10 zu'l-hijja.

Like his teacher, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab also earned his living by copying manuscripts. This however, was insufficient to support him. Some time between the age and forty and fifty he married for the first time and started a family. Previously anything he had obtained in *futuh* he gave away, his only possessions being some clothes and material for copying manuscripts. After his marriage he retained some of the *futuh* as his family's share, himself following the same path as before. His *khanqah* became a haven for Indian pilgrims whom he entertained and to whom he gave money and provisions for their journey to Medina.

The Shaikh continued to lecture on *Fiqh*, *Hadis* and Arabic lexicography close to the Ka'ba. His moments away from lecturing, prayer and meditation were spent copying his precious manuscripts. In old age, although his eyesight was weak he managed to continue the same routine.

The people of Mecca, who were generally interested in the sufi orders of the western Islamic world, gave Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab the title of second Shaikh Abu'l-Abbas Ahmad al-Mursi (616/1219-686/1287). An Andalusian, Shaikh Abu'l-Abbas was known to have made a great contribution to popularizing the Shazilliya *silsila*. From Morocco to Egypt and from Syria to Arabia the Shazilliyyas scored great success. Although unconcerned with his own fame Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab was impressed by the spiritual attainments of Shaikh Taju'd-Din ibn 'Ata'u'llah 'Abbas (d. Cairo 709/1309), the author of *Lata'if al-minanfi Manaqib al-Shaikh Abu'l-Abbas wa Abu'l-Hasan*, a biography of Shaikh Abu'l-'Abbas and his teacher, Shaikh Abu'l-Hasan Shazili.<sup>1</sup>

In his writings Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab made a subtle distinction between *'ilm* (knowledge) and *zikr* (recollection). He asserted that *'ilm* might be likened to food which was indispensable for human beings and was a source of universal benefit. *Zikr*, on the other hand, he believed to be like a medicine to be used occasionally to cure illness. To him the sufi teaching that mystics should be almost perpetually involved in *zikr* really meant that those who devoted themselves to virtuous deeds were actually doing just that. To him the preformance of obligatory prayer, recitation of the Qur'an and the teaching of religious subjects were all forms of *zikr*. Those who abandoned studying and teaching and turned their backs on the world retiring into seclusion and dedicating themselves to *zikr*, were to Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab's mind replacing food by medicine. Using the same analogy he maintained that in the early stages of sufi initiation, novices were diseased by their worldly involvements and needed a continu-



ing remedy which should be *zikr* and meditation. Like sages of the past who improved their morals and whose actions were meritorious, they continued to spread religious knowledge, and he believed that no saintly person could ignore the acquisition of knowledge.

Once a dervish asked the Shaikh whether *namaz* (prayer) should be preferred to *zikr*. His reply was that while *namaz* was highly meritorious, constant *zikr* helped to obtain the stage of *unio-mystica* leading to annihilation into the *Wahdat*. Unable to explain this mystical stage he remarked that it was an indescribable mystical perception which was intended to be experienced. Once it was perceived it left an indelible mark on the devotee's mind. Referring to the *da'wat-i asma'* preached by some mystics, the Shaikh observed that although he was not aware if they had experienced the *wasl* (union) he did know that they were rude and impatient. Moreover if one failed to treat them with respect they became vindictive. The keys to mystical practices, believed Shaikh 'Abdu'l-wahhab, were social ethics, forbearance and a readiness to make sacrifices in the cause of others.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab defined *zikr-i khafi* (silent *zikr*) as a form of recollection recited in such a way that no-one close could hear it. His disciples drew his attention to the statements by some sufis that *zikr i-khafi* was to be performed in such a manner that the tongue did not move, and that in its perfect form the heart remained ignorant of the performance of *zikr*. The Shaikh did not contradict this; but he added that sufis who gave this definition had a different situation in mind. He did believe, however, that *zikr-i khafi* should be performed in seclusion and retreat.

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab avoided explaining his mystical experiences to those who were not fellow travellers, and sometimes even to other eminent mystics. He considered mystical experience to be a strictly guarded secret which, if he had to explain it, should be described only in its essential points which could be made comprehensible to the listener.

The Shaikh also had a non-committal attitude regarding the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He did not lecture on the *Fusus al-Hikam*, but like the *Faqihs*, refused to criticise or ridicule the ideas contained in it. He advised his disciples first to follow the orthodox Sunni path and only then to study the *Fusus al-Hikam*. However he did warn that obscure points in the *Wahdat al-Wujud* should not be allowed to confuse the reader. He advised sufi novices that if in their early career they had heard any apparently incorrect statements about mysticism they should not reject them hastily and become bigoted but should try to sympathetically understand their positive and negative aspects. If the statement was consistent with the truth it could be accepted or rejected. If the latter course were impracticable, there was no harm in ignoring the statement in the interests of Islam.



Once, when praising Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Karim al-Jili (767/1365—832/1428), Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab remarked that al-Jili had written the *Insan al-Kamil* to expound the principles of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* after the style of Ibn 'Arabi. Al-Jili was also the author of an impressive commentary on the Qur'an, nineteen volumes of which were devoted to a discussion of the words *Bismi'llahi'r-rahmani'r-rahim* (In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful). Although he accepted the work as subtle and scholarly, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab believed it was sugar-coated poison just like the *Fusus al-Hikam* and the *Futuhat al-Makkiyya*, and that those who could avoid such poison and save themselves from harming their faith were indeed blessed.

Moreover, the Shaikh believed that an understanding of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* as laid down in such works as the *Fusus al-Hikam* was not imperative for mystical training, rather it was the performance of ascetic exercises in obedience to the principles of sufism which was indispensable and inevitably aroused mystical sensitivity in the neophyte. However Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab cautioned his disciples that if in spite of performing prayers and fasting, a sufi made ecstatic utterances, it should charitably be assumed these were spontaneous expressions of ecstasy and they should not hasten to accuse him of heresy or infidelity.

The Shaikh was flexible also in his view of *sama'*. He asserted it was not objectionable occasionally to hear a *ghazal* or local tune. However he did not approve of Indian *sama'* gatherings in which all classes of people, both saintly and sinful, mixed promiscuously. *Sama'* to him was an act of worship which should be practised strictly according to the rules of the *Shori'a*.<sup>1</sup>

The teachings of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Muttaqi Qadiri, as previously stated, were reintroduced into the Indian sub-continent by his talented disciple, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, but his influence cannot be traced beyond Hijaz and India. A number of Indian sufis of the Shattariyya, Chishtiyya and Naqshbandiyya orders who lived in Mecca or Medina, either temporarily or permanently, were more successful in disseminating their teachings throughout other parts of the Islamic world. The most prominent was Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din's disciple, Mir Saiyid Sibghatu'llah bin Ruhu'llah. Born at Bharauch he travelled to Ahmadabad where he became a disciple of Shaikh Wajihu'-Din Gujarati. For some years he taught the Shattariyya doctrines and forms of *zikr* in the town of his birth. In 999/1590-91 he visited Malwa, after which he embarked on a pilgrimage. Travelling through Khandesh he reached Ahmadnagar, where he remained for one year at the request of the ruler. He then moved to Bijapur where the Sultan made arrangements for the Saiyid to travel to Mecca in his royal boat. At Medina Saiyid Sibghatu'llah

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 272-74.



built a house and a *khanqah*, possibly out of the finance he received from the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. In Medina he accepted only gifts offered by the representatives of the Sultan of Turkey. In 1015/1606-07 he died and was buried at Baqi' in Medina.<sup>1</sup>

During his lifetime the Saiyid initiated disciples into the Shattariyya, Chishtiyya, Suhrawardiyya, Madariyya, Khalwatiyya, Hamadaniyya, Naqshbandiyya and Firdawsiiyya orders, on the authority vested in him by Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din Gujarati who had himself been initiated into all eight orders.<sup>2</sup> Basically, however, he and his disciples were Shattariyyas. Saiyid Sibghatu'llah also introduced the *Jawahir-i khamisa* and other Shattariyya mystical treatises to the sufis and scholars of Mecca and Medina.

Among the Saiyid's disciples who were mainly responsible for popularizing his teachings in the Arabic-speaking world, was Shaikh Ahmad, the son of 'Ali bin 'Abdu'l Quddus bin Muhammad 'Abbas Shinnawi. His ancestors had been famous sufis and the Shinnawis traditionally received their literary and religious background from Egypt's leading '*alims*. First initiated by his father in Medina, Shaikh Ahmad became the disciple of Saiyid Sibghatu'llah and finally settled in Medina, dying in the Holy Land on 8 Zu'l-hijja 1028/16 November 1619. His earthly remains were buried at Baqi' near those of his *pir*.<sup>3</sup> The *khalifas* of Shaikh Ahmad Shinnawi continued the Shattariyya mission throughout many parts of the Islamic world.

One of *khalifas* of Shaikh Ahmad Shinnawi, the most notable was an '*alim* named Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi, whose father was called Muhammad and grandfather, Yunus al-Qushshashi, and who had been given the title of 'Abdu'n-Nabi ibn Shaikh Ahmad. The family was from Dijana, a village near Jerusalem. According to Shah Waliu'llah, Shaikh Yunus was a recluse and an outstanding sufi. In order to retain his anonymity in Medina he sold *qushash* or second hand ware such as old shoes and clothing. Shaikh Yunus' grandson, Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi (b. 12 Rabi' I 991/April 1583) received an excellent religious and mystical education and later became a strong supporter of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. *Anfasu'l-'drifin* relates an interesting anecdote illustrating the beliefs of both Shaikh Ahmad Shinnawi and Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi regarding this philosophy. While resting in his cell Shaikh Shinnawi spied a lizard crawling up a wall and, although his first instinct was to kill it, he was hindered by his belief in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. For some time he struggled within himself as to whether or not to kill the lizard. Finally, in compliance with the laws of the *Shari'a*, he threw a stone at it but happily for the

<sup>1</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 565b.

<sup>2</sup>Al-Qushshashi, *al-Limt al-majid*, Hyderabad, 1327/1909, pp. 67-82.

<sup>3</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, pp. 178-79.



Shaikh the lizard escaped unharmed. Shaikh Ahmad declared he would have unhesitatingly killed the reptile, while Shah Waliu'llah's comment was that the *Wahdat al-Wujud* was a reality and that the multiple manifestations could not conflict with the *Wahdat*. He continued that, although as a form of Divine self-manifestation fire and water were identical, each was endowed with different characteristics—fire made water evaporate and water extinguished fire. The laws of the *Shari'a* were intended to regulate the life of the universe as well as its multiple manifestations. With a deep understanding of the Unity of Being one did not recognize a situation leading to the conflict of Unity with multiplicity. The Shah concluded his comments with the following verse of Rumi:

Since colourlessness (pure Unity) became the captive of colour  
(manifestations in the phenomenal world), A Moses came into  
conflict with a Moses.<sup>1</sup>

Although Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi lived in Medina he regularly visited Mecca on pilgrimage. Free of the stern sour personality so often associated with *Faqihs* he was, unlike many ascetics, a socially unconcerned individual. Although he himself never visited the wealthy, if they called on him they were always politely received. However he never failed to remind such visitors to follow the lawful and reject the unlawful. Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi died on 19 Zu'l-hijja 1071/15 August 1661.<sup>2</sup>

Of the *khalifas* of Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi, Shaikh Ibrahim (al-Kurani) al-Kurdi was something of a linguist who read, among other languages, Arabic, Persian, Kurdish and Turkish. He was also proficient in Shafi'i *Fiqh* and *Hadis*. After travelling through Egypt and Syria he went to Medina where he received the gift of a *khirqah* from Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi. During his stay in Syria he was believed to have seen Ibn 'Arabi in a dream and was convinced of the strength of his own belief in the *Wahdat-al-Wujud*.

Shaikh Ibrahim was a delicate listener *sama'* and the custom seems to have been exceedingly popular during his lifetime. A teacher of the Ottoman Sultan in Turkey called Khoja, who resented the popularity of *sama'*, when in Medina informed the Shaikh that he had made great efforts to help uproot the sinful innovation (*bid'a*) of the recitation of the *zikr-i jahr* in mosques. In reply Shaikh Ibrahim recited this Qur'anic verse.

And who doth greater wrong than he who forbiddeth the approach  
to the sanctuaries of Allah lest His name be mentioned therein.<sup>3</sup>

Somewhat taken aback, the Khoja recovered sufficiently to produce extracts from *fatwas* from the books of Hanafi jurisprudence prohibiting the *sama'*. To this the Shaikh replied that he belonged to another school

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, p. 179-80.

<sup>2</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, pp. 179-80.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, II, 114.



of *Fiqh* (Shafi'i) and therefore was not bound to follow Hanafi decrees. Shaikh Ibrahim promptly wrote a treatise in self-defence. Owing to the Khoja's influence in the government Shaikh Ibrahim's well-wishers advised him to adopt a more conciliatory attitude, to which the Shaikh replied that nothing could restrain him from expressing the truth. Shaikh Ibrahim died in 1101/1689.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Ibrahim's son, Shaikh Abu Tahir Muhammad, received his early education from his father who not only gave him his *khirqah* but procured from him *khirqas* and the authority to initiate disciples from several other leading sufis. Endowed with an unquenching thirst for knowledge Shaikh Abu Tahir was taught by various specialists in *Fiqh* and *Hadis*. He also studied the works of the Indian philosopher, Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hakim Siyalkoti and of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, under the guidance of Shaikh 'Abdu'llah of Lahore, while in Mecca and Medina. Shah Waliu'llah was his student and attended his lectures on *Hadis*. Shaikh Abu Tahir died in Ramazan 1145/February-March 1733.<sup>2</sup>

A distinguished disciple of Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi in Medina was Shaikh Hasan 'Ajami who had been taught by a number of eminent scholars and mystics. He also specialized in the *da'wat-i asma'* of the Shattariyyas. He died in 1113/1701-02.<sup>3</sup>

Although the mystical teachings of Saiyid Sibghatu'llah spread throughout a vast proportion of the Islamic world, it was Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf (c. 1620-c 1693) who influenced the history of Sumatra and the rest of South-East Asia. The Shaikh was a native of Singkel, a village north of Fansur on the west coast of Sumatra. In 1643 he made a pilgrimage to Mecca. For the next nineteen years he remained under the guidance of Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi and his successor, Shaikh Ibrahim (al-Kurani) al-Kurdi. After the former's death in 1661 he returned to Aceh in Sumatra. In order to write in his mother-tongue he then took lessons in Pasai-Malay.

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf's subsequent translation of and commentary on, the Qur'an (based on the *Anwar al-tanzil wa-asrar at-ta'wil* of 'Abdu'llah bin 'Umar al-Bayzawi,<sup>4</sup> enhanced his reputation among the orthodox in Sumatra. His Malay treatises on the *Wahdat al-Wujud* made him the father of the orthodox reinterpretation of the *Wujudiyya* doctrine. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf also compiled a number of treatises in Malay explaining the process of self-manifestation of the Absolute and the various stages of the 'determination of Being'. The most important of these were the *Kifayat al-Muhtajin*; *Daqa'iq al-Huruf* and *Bayan Tajalli*.

<sup>1</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, pp. 184-86.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 190-92.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 186-87.

<sup>4</sup>Winstedt, R.O., *The Malays: A Cultural History*, London, 1956, p. 35.



According to H.J. De Graaf, 'His fame was not confined to his native country and spread as far as Java. After his death the people venerated him as a national hero, so that later he came to be regarded as the first Muslim preacher in Aceh. Thousands still visit his grave, from which he derives his name, Teunku di Kuala'.<sup>1</sup> Not only did Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf introduce the Shattariyya order into the Malayan and Javanese regions, but single handed he also initiated disciples into the Naqsh-bandiyya, Qadiriyya and Chishtiyya orders in those areas.<sup>2</sup>

In his writings, the Shaikh drew on both the works of Qusheshashi and Fazlu'llah Burhanpuri's *Tuhfa*.<sup>3</sup> urging Muslims to avoid literal interpretations of sufic terminology. He wrote:

Shaikh Junaid says: "Were one condition to say to another: 'I am you at that grade before we were manifested and differentiated and received our proper natures', that would be true. And were a number of conditions to say to a condition: 'Before our manifestation we were you and you were we', that would also be true. But if they meant this after manifestation and differentiation it would not be true for the exterior has its requirements and likewise the interior. Inwardness implies latency (the Malay translation has '*adam*') whereas outwardness implies existence." So ends the statement of Junaid. No one must confuse these two principles as long as he retains individual consciousness, for as some of the Sufis have said: "The Perfect Man fully recognizes the rights and prerogatives of everything." In other words he does not confuse things that differ, such as the grades of Divine Knowledge and Creation, for what applies in the case of one does not always apply in the case of the other. For example, if a man says that the world and all created things are God - i.e. His Being - this would be true at the grade of *Ahadiyya* from the standpoint of their obliteration in Him in the same way as the drop of water fallen into the sea, that was mentioned earlier, but it would not be true at the grade of created things when the individual external entities (*a'yan kharijiyah*) have been shaped into the forms we know. This may suffice to prove the difference between these two modes of existence, without forcing the meaning of either of them. We should not confuse them in regard to their definitions, for as our Shaikh says: "The confusing of things that differ is a custom of those who are ignorant of God not of those who know Him."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>De Graaf, H.J., South-East Asian Islam to the Eighteenth Century, in P.M. Holt, A.K.S. Lambton and B. Lewis, ed., *The Cambridge history of Islam*, Cambridge, 1970, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>See chain of authorities in Arabic MS., Jakarta, DCLCI, ff. 172a-104b.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, pp. 284-85.

<sup>4</sup>Johns, A., *Daqa'iq al-Huruf* by 'Abd al-Ra'uf of Singkel, *JRAS*, April, 1955, p. 72.



About half a century earlier Hamza Fansuri, an interpreter of the mystical philosophy of Ibn 'Arabi in both prose and poetry, became a victim of the political vicissitudes and court intrigues in his home town and was condemned as heretical *Wujdiyya*. Apart from what can be gleaned from some of his verses little is known about Shaikh Hamza's life. According to Syed Muhammad Naguib al-Attas, he lived in the period preceding and during the reign of Shah 'Alam 'Ala'u'd-Din Ri'ayat Shah (1589-1694) of Aceh. The Sultan, known as Saiyid al-Mukammal, was eulogized by Hamza in this way:

Shah 'Alim the just king,  
The Pole whose perfection is complete;  
The saint of God who is eminently united [with God],  
The gnostic king, moreover the most excellent.<sup>1</sup>

Apparently Shaikh Hamza Fansuri made a pilgrimage and was initiated as a Qadiriyya at Baghdad. Although his own period was a relatively secure one for sufis in Sumatra, in his writings he warned those wishing to embark on the path of mysticism not to be frightened by 'the wrath of the Qadi.' In a verse he wrote:

Tell this to our master the Judge:  
The colour of this pure drink is clear;  
Whosoever drinks it is intoxicated and annihilated  
And he wins the Beloved Who is called the Enduring One.<sup>2</sup>

A scholar and sufi who mercilessly rejected Shaikh Hamza's *Wahdat al-Wujud* and that of his contemporary, Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din al-Sumatrani of Pasa'i (d. 1630) was an Indian Shaikh Nuru'd-Din 'Ali, the son of Hasanji ibn Muhammad Hamid al-Raniri (from Randir, a coastal town in Gujarat). Shaikh Nuru'd-Din's family had close contacts with Aceh. In 1580 and 1583 his uncle had visited this kingdom, but had failed to generate an interest in logic, rhetoric, ethics and *Fiqh* due to the overriding interest in sufism of Shaikh Hamza Fansuri and Shamsu'd-Din. After Raniri's uncle had made a pilgrimage to Mecca he returned to Aceh where this time he was more successful, possibly due to his new status as a Hajji. Apparently Nuru'd-Din learnt Malay from his uncle, his mother (who was believed to be a Malay) and from the many merchants who traded with the towns along the Straits of Malacca.

No details of the early life of Nuru'd-Din Raniri are available, although it is known he was initiated as a Rifa'iyya by Saiyid Abu Hafis 'Umar ibn 'Abdu'llah Ba-Shayban. The latter, although born in India, had studied in Arabia before settling in Bijapur at the court of Muhammad bin Ibrahim 'Adil Shah (1035/1626-1066/1656). In 1620 Shaikh Nuru'd-Din went on pilgrimage to Mecca and then returned home, but

<sup>1</sup>Naguib al-Attas, S.M., *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*, Kuala Lumpur, 1970, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 22.



he continued to keep contact with the Aceh *'ulama'*. In 1636, after the death in Aceh of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607–36), a strong ruler and a far-sighted administrator, Shaikh Nuru'd-Din Raniri decided to migrate from Gujarat to Aceh. Iskandar's successor, Iskandar Sani (1636–41) was reputedly a friend of the orthodox *'ulama'* and an opponent of mystics. On 31 May 1637 Raniri arrived in Aceh where he became a court favourite and historian. Not only did he write a monumental history, the *Bustanu's-salatin*, but he produced a large number of treatises on mysticism. He was also constantly involved in debates with the disciples of Shaikh Hamza Fansuri and Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din Sumatrani at Sultan Iskandar's court. During these sessions he branded these two, plus their *pirs*, as heretics.<sup>1</sup>

Raniri divided the *Wujudiyya* into two: the pious (*muwahhida*) and heretic (*mulhida*). He defined the heretical *Wujudiyya* as follows:

According to the heretical *Wujudiyyah* being is one; and that is the Being of God. The Absolute Being of God does not exist by itself by which It can be distinguished save in relation to the creatures.<sup>2</sup> Hence the creatures are God's Being and the Being of God is the being of the creatures. The World is then God and God is the world. In this way they affirm [as inseparable] God's Absolute Being with the being of the creatures, and they say that nothing exists but God. Furthermore they believe the formula *la ilaha illa'l-lah* to mean. 'There is no being save God's Being'. They desire its meaning to be: 'There is no being in me save God's Being which is my being.' They further say that: 'We are of the same being and substance as God,' and that God's Essence can be known, and His qualities<sup>3</sup> and dimensions<sup>4</sup> clearly visible by virtue of His external existence in space and time. [Indeed] these are the sayings and beliefs of those who are clearly unbelievers. Shaikh Muhyi'l-Din ibnu'l 'Arabi (may God sanctify his secret!) in his book the *Futuhatu'l-Makkiyyah*, wherein he deals with the exposition of the belief of all the adepts in the mystical doctrine, [positively] rejects and invalidates the school of (the heretical) *Wujudiyyah*. He says:

'...From these sayings the belief of a group has strayed from the path of truth for they say: "Nothing exists save that which we see."

<sup>1</sup>S.M. Naguib al-Attas, *Raniri and the Wujudiyyah of 17th century Aceh*, monographs of the Malaysian Branch Royal Asiatic Society, III, 1966, pp. 12–15.

<sup>2</sup>"The idea that God does not exist by Himself by which He can be distinguished save in relation to the creatures is rejected by Hamza". [note by Al-Attas, no. 301, p. 103].

<sup>3</sup>By qualities we mean colour, taste, smell, warmth and coldness, dryness and all such things that are attributes of physical bodies. [note by Al-Attas, p. 104].

<sup>4</sup>By dimension is meant largeness and smallness, shortness and width, depth and weight, and so on [note by al-Attas, p. 104].



So they have made out the Universe to be God and God the Universe itself. All such beliefs are erroneous, for the Being of God is that upon which [all other] beings depend for their existence. (That is, God's Being creates their existence.) If indeed their gnosis were perfect they would not have said such a thing.'

[In reality] they are ashamed of the people of Islam and they fear that they might be proved wrong by the generality of the schools and by religion. If they openly declare: "We are God and God is us" they will not be accepted by them [i.e. the people of Islam]. So they hide themselves behind perforated veils that their evil words and strayed belief may not be seen [i.e. heard and known]. And they couch their words: "God is indeed ourselves and our beings and we are His Self and His Being" in [crafty] disguise. But such deception does not escape [the understanding of] the wise, and are (*sic.*) not hidden from those who are perfect in their understanding.<sup>1</sup>

Raniri was not a follower of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* of the Mujaddid, nor did he offer any alternative to the *Wahdot al-Wujud*. However he was a strict follower of Ibn 'Arabi and his Persian and Indian interpreters such as Jami and Shaikh 'Ali ibn Hamid al-Mahaimi,<sup>2</sup> reserving his hostility for Shaikh Hamza Fansuri and Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din Sumatrani.

Raniri returned to his hometown in 1644, dying there in 1658, without ever returning to Aceh. Among his disciples was Shaikh Yusuf of Macassar, who was also a student of Raniri's *pir*, Ba-Shayban. Shaikh Yusuf wrote sufi treatise,<sup>3</sup> drawing his ideas from the works of Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chargh Dihlawi and Shaikh Taju'd-Din Sambhali.

Shaikh Taju'd-Din had been prompted to migrate from India to Mecca neither for political reasons nor by the desire to undertake a merit-acquiring pilgrimage. Rather he was prompted by sheer frustration at his inability to achieve the highest rank among the *Khalifas* of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah Naqshbandi. Shaikh Taju'd-Din was a native of Sambhal who had made contact with Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah during the latter's first visit there in a search of a perfect guide. Shaikh Taju'd-Din suggested he become the disciple of his *pir*, Shaikh Ilah Bakhsh, a successor of Saiyid 'Ali Qiwan.<sup>4</sup> However a mystical inspiration from the Naqshbandiyya Khwajas of Transoxiana prevented Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah from taking this advice. After a short stay at Sambhal, the Khwaja left the town. In 1599-1600 the Khwaja finally settled in Delhi and Shaikh Taju'd-Din hastened to visit him and became his disciple. A great favourite of his *pir*, he loved

<sup>1</sup>Raniri and the *Wujudiyyah* of 17th century Aceh, pp. 103-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ali b. Shaikh Ahmad Nawa'iti of Maha'im (Konkan) died in Jumada I, 835/January, 1432.

<sup>3</sup>The following treatises of Shaikh Yusuf are available in the National library, Jakarta, *Tuhfat al-labih*, *Safinat al-najat*.

<sup>4</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 70.



to compare his own mystical achievements with those of other disciples of the Khwaja and was the first of them to receive permission to initiate others.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Tajū'd-Din moved to Sambhal where he began training disciples. The Khwaja's other disciples, who were jealous of Tajū'd-Din's rise to eminence, began to complain of his stern handling of disciples. The inhumane manner in which he attempted to reform a *Majzub* (Shaikh Abu Bakr) shocked the Khwaja. He wrote warning his disciple against intolerance, arguing that even eminent sufis could commit serious sins, so therefore a *mujzub* who had lost his senses was much more likely to neglect the duties prescribed by the *Shari'a* for those in their right minds.<sup>2</sup> In another letter Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah urged Shaikh Tajū'd-Din not to initiate disciples into non-Naqshbandiyya orders on the authority of his previous *pirs*, asking him to confine himself exclusively to the Naqshbandiyya orders.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Tajū'd-Din's hot temper was never to improve. Shocked to see the rapid pace of the mystical progress of the Mujaddid, he was not prepared to accept his prominence because of his own seniority. After the death of a Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah a conflict was inevitable. Shaikh Tajū'd-Din attempted to gain support for his claim to leadership of the Naqshbandiyyas throughout India and Kashmir. His attempt was a failure and in despair he moved to Mecca.

In the holy city Shaikh Muhammad 'Ilan (d. 1031/1621-22) a famed saint and ascetic, became Shaikh Tajū'd-Din's disciple. Shaikh 'Ilan's influence and prestige helping to reinstate the reputation of his *pir* Shaikh Tajū'd-Din's translation into Arabic of the *Rashahat-i ainu'l-hayat* of Kashifi and the *Nafahat-ul-uns* of Jami from Persian greatly helped to popularize the Naqshbandiyya sufis in Mecca, Medina, Najd, Yaman, Basra and Syria. He also translated several Persian treatises by Naqshbandiyya *pirs* into Arabic. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghani bin Isma'il al-Nablusi (1641-1713), an enthusiastic interpreter of the works of Ibn 'Arabi, wrote a potential commentary on an Arabic treatise by Shaikh Tajū'd-Din which outlined Naqshbandiyya practices. The original was called *Al-risala fi suluk khulasat al-Sadat al-Naqshbandiyya* and the commentary was entitled *Miftah al-'ait sharh al-risalat al-Naqshbandiyya*<sup>4</sup> Shaikh Tajū'd-Din's contribution to Arabic literature and his mystical achievements were greatly appreciated by the Arabs and Syrians, Shaikh Tajū'd-Din came to be known, as he reported to his Indian friends, as the second Shaikh 'Ilan.

<sup>1</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat-i Khwaja Baqi Billah*, no. 36.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, no. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Saiyid Muhammad Khali Muradi, *Silk aldurar fi a'yan al-qaran al-sani 'ashr*, III, reprint, Baghdad, n.d., pp. 32-33.



The Shaikh visited India several times and did some travelling in the Middle East. In 1037/1628 he was seen in Mecca during the pilgrimage month in a highly ecstatic condition. Leading Meccan *'alims* and sufis including Shaikh Ahmad Nakhli, were impressed by Shaikh Taju'd-Din's piety and flocked to become his disciples.<sup>1</sup> The image in Mecca and Medina of Shaikh Taju'd-Din related by Shah Waliu'llah was a highly flattering one. The Shaikh died in 1052/1642 and was buried in Mecca.

Shaikh Taju'd-Din in his time would have hardly mentioned the Mujaddid's teachings, which, however, were systematically disseminated by Shaikh Adam Banuri and his disciples after their arrival in Mecca from India.

The ancestors of Shaikh Adam Banuri were from Roh; on his father's side he was a Saiyid and on his mother's an Afghan. As one of his ancestors had settled in Banur, near Sirhind, the family came to be known by that name. Shaikh Adam Banuri was initiated into the Naqshbandiyya order by Hajji Khizr Khan Afghan, a disciple of the Mujaddid. Later when he could guide Shaikh Adam no further, his *pir* suggested that he be trained under the Mujaddid. Confident in what he believed to be his own extensive spiritual achievements, Shaikh Adam was shocked to be told he had not reached even a preliminary stage of sufism.<sup>2</sup> Shaikh Adam started training with the Mujaddid and soon realized that he was the only *pir* who could carry him further mystically. His progress, was rapid and he was soon appointed a *khalifa* by the Mujaddid and commissioned to work at Banur.<sup>3</sup>

In 1035/1625-26 Shaikh Adam Banuri wrote a book on the teachings of the Mujaddid and the Naqshbandiyyas entitled *Kalimatu'l-ma'arif*. Two of his other works, the *Khulasatu'l-ma'arif* and the *Nikatu'l-asrar*, were among other well-known works on sufi teachings and on the importance of the Naqshbandiyya order. A large number of Afghans became his disciples, and Muhammad Amin estimated the number of his disciples to be 100,000 with 100 *khalifas*.<sup>4</sup> Although this figure would appear grossly exaggerated, so large was the Shaikh's Afghan following that he became suspect in the eyes of the Mughal officials and nobility.

In 1052/1642-43 the Shaikh arrived in Lahore with his Afghan disciples, by this time amounting to the size of a private army. The Mughal governor was so apprehensive that the Emperor decided to dispatch his *Diwan*, Sa'du'llah Khan, accompanied by Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hakim Sialkoti to investigate the situation. The Shaikh ignored them both. However he was unable to prove his Saiyid descent. On Sa'du'llah Khan's recom-

<sup>1</sup>*Anfasu'l-'arifin*, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup>Adam Banuri, *Khulasat al-ma'arif*, India Office MS., 2b; Muhammad Amin, *Manaqibu'l-hazarat*, personal collection, ff. 62b-63b.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, p. 236.

<sup>4</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 384.



mendation, the Emperor became convinced that this great Afghan following was a potential threat to the Empire and had the Shaikh and some of his disciples banished to Mecca.<sup>1</sup>

In Mecca and Medina Shaikh Adam Banuri uninhibitedly lectured on the mystical philosophy outlined by the Mujaddid. Once, while attending an assembly of the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina, he began describing the Mujaddid's pet theory about the superiority of the reality of the Ka'ba to the reality of the Prophet Muhammad and the other prophets. In the audience was Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi who challenged Shaikh Adam to prove his theory.<sup>2</sup> The latter replied that the Prophet used to prostrate himself before the Ka'ba but to him Ka'ba was not a structure of stone and roofs but Reality incomprehensible to the human intelligence. Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi thereupon rejected Shaikh Ahmad's logic on the following grounds:

1. Muslims unanimously agreed that the Prophet Muhammad was superior to the whole of creation that even his grave was superior to the Ka'ba.
2. A denial of the importance of the form of the Ka'ba amounted to a rejection of the clear injunctions of the Qur'an contained in several verses and innumerable authentic traditions. As the '*ulama*' regarded those who did not recognize the Ka'ba as infidels, one who denied its significance was an even more reprehensible infidel.
3. To call the Ka'ba stone was an insult to the House of Allah and one who treated it so contemptuously was an infidel.

According to the *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, Shaikh Ahmad Qushshashi's arguments partially convinced Shaikh Adam and he did admit the superiority of the Prophet Muhammad over the Ka'ba, while rejecting that of the other prophets and faithful over the Ka'ba. Qushshashi followed up with a treatise expanding his point of view.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Adam Banuri preached the teachings of the Mujaddid to the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina some important letters of the Mujaddid were translated into Arabic. The Mujaddidiyya pilgrims to Mecca and Medina reinforced the preachings of Shaikh Adam and the visits<sup>4</sup> of Khwaja Muhammad Sa'id and Khwaja Muhammad Ma'sum to Mecca and Medina in 1067/1656 made Hijaz an active centre of the controversies surrounding the Mujaddid's mystical claims.

Two years after the death of Qushshashi in 1661 Shaikh 'Adam Banuri also died. The controversy over the Mujaddid's teachings would have died down naturally, but an attempt to ban the study of the *Maktubat* led

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 385; *Manaqibul-hazarat*, ff. 63b-64a; *Anfasul-'arifin*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, pp. 214-15, 220.

<sup>3</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, ff. 605b-6a.

<sup>4</sup>*supra*, pp. 242-43, Appendix C.



by Indian '*ulama*' continued as a serious threat. Although the Mujaddid's followers in India wrote defensive treatises, the opposition would not be silenced. An *istifta*<sup>1</sup> was written to the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina containing their charges. Although Ibrahim al-Kurani died in 1689 his disciple, Muhammad bin 'Abdu'r-Rasul al-Barzanji, took over the leadership of those '*ulama*' hostile to the Mujaddid.

The *istifta* which reached Hijaz in Jumada II, 1093/June-July 1682, evoked an immediate reply from Barzanji. In retaliation he produced two books repudiating the Mujaddid's claims. The *Qadh al-zand wa-Qadah al-rand fi radd jahalat ahl al-Sirhind* was completed on 15 Rajab 1093/20 July 1682<sup>2</sup> and *al-Nashira al-najira lil-firqa al-fajira* on 7 Muharram 1095/26 December 1683.<sup>3</sup> In his *Qadh al-zand* (which was also later translated into Persian) the author went to the extent of claiming that the ruler of India had himself sought a decision from Ibrahim al-Kurani, al-Barzanji and other '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina.<sup>4</sup> In view of the fact that in 1090/1679 the study of the *Maktubat* was banned in Aurangabad on the Emperor's order,<sup>5</sup> he may have advised the Indian '*ulama*' to seek the opinion of leading theologians in Mecca and Medina in order to strengthen his own position. However the *istifta* was given official status by the Sherif of Mecca who sent the Qazi al-Hind (probably the chief Qazi) Barzanji's books together with other treatises written by the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina in opposition to the Mujaddid's letters. The Sherif wrote that the '*ulama*' of the Hijaz had unanimously decided that Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi was an infidel and that those who dissented from this opinion were insufficiently educated.<sup>6</sup>

The issues raised by Barzanji have been summarized by Friedmann as follows:

Muhammad is the best of creatures and did not leave this world without first realizing in himself all possible perfections. Sirhindi is therefore patently wrong when he says that the Ka'bah is superior to the Prophet. Similarly, it is indefensible and preposterous to maintain that the Prophet reached perfection only a thousand years after his death. Al-Barzanji is the first critic to say explicitly that Sirhindi's theory of the *haqiqat-i muhammadi* changing to *haqiqat-i ahmadi* is a thinly veiled hint at his own person. Like the author of *Kasir al-Iukhalifin*, he flatly accuses Sirhindi of claiming to be a prophet. The desire to uphold this claim is

<sup>1</sup>Seeking a legal opinion from competent religious authorities.

<sup>2</sup>Asafiya Library Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) MS, copied by Zainu'l-'Abidin Muhammad bin Hasan bin 'Abdu'l-Karim bin Muhammad al-Barzanji on I, Rajab, 1157/10 August, 1744 in Aurangabad.

<sup>3</sup>Asafiya Library Hyderabad MS. ff. 3b, 5b, 6a, 10b, 13a, 14b, 17b.

<sup>4</sup>*Qadh al-zand*, ff. 3a-3b.

<sup>5</sup>*supra*, p. 223, Appendix C.

<sup>6</sup>*Qadh al-zand*, ff. 3b, 4a, 10a, 34b.



the reason why Sirhindi called himself the Renewer of the Second Millennium and said that the Prophet Muhammad disappeared when he himself was sent to guard and preserve the community. With caustic sarcasm al-Barzanji says: 'I wish I knew who is (*sic.*) guarding the community after his death! He has been dead for sixty years; not even his name left India, let alone his guardianship and preservation! ...The bodies of the prophets never decay or disintegrate; it is therefore manifest infidelity (*kuf'r sarah*) to maintain that the body of Muhammad disappeared a thousand years after his death. Al-Barzanji then assails the very concept of the Second Millennium by stating that it will not be allowed to run its course: 'What is the meaning of the Renewer of the Second Millennium? Does a second millennium remain from the time allotted to this community so that he can be its renewer? Did the '*ulama*' not agree unanimously and did *al-hafiz* al-Suyuti not say in his epistle [called] *al-Kashf* that not even five hundred years will elapse after the Millennium and that the Day of Resurrection will take place four hundred odd years after it?...Millennial renewal, unlike its centennial counterpart, has not been mentioned in the classical sources. Furthermore, it implies the abolition of Muhammad's prophecy and of his law. The next point attacked by al-Barzanji is Sirhindi's claim to have direct relationship with God without prophetic meditation. Sirhindi's claim to have been created from the remnants of the clay used in the creation of Muhammad is also criticized. The millennial revival of prophetic perfections and Sirhindi's claim of superiority to Abu Bakr are sharply attacked. Sirhindi cannot claim, says al-Barzanji, that he spoke on the spur of the moment while in the state of intoxication; he deliberately committed his ideas to writing and did not withdraw them even when cautioned and reprimanded by such eminent persons as 'Abu al-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawi. No consideration can be shown to a person whose infidelity manifests itself in his disrespect for the Prophet.'<sup>1</sup>

Like Barzanji, another '*alim*, Hasan bin 'Ali, also attacked the Mujaddid in a treatise called *al-'Asab al-Hindi*.<sup>2</sup> However, as noted by the Sherif of Mecca, the Mujaddidis had also mustered some support. This included Muhammad Beg al-Uzbeki who had come to Arabia probably to mobilize opinion in the Mujaddid's favour and wrote the '*Atiyat al-Wahhab al-sila bayna al-khata' wa'l-sawab*',<sup>3</sup> which he completed on 2 Rabi' I 1094/1 March 1683. In it he argued that the views of the '*ulama*' of the two holy cities of Islam were based on incorrect translations of the

<sup>1</sup>Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, pp. 98-99.

<sup>2</sup>*Al-'Asab al-Hindi*, Asafiya MS. ff. 1b-3a.

<sup>3</sup>At the margin of the third volume of the Arabic *Maktubat-i Hazrat Mujaddid* by Muhammad Murad al-Manzawi, *Mu'arrab al-Maktubat al-Sharifa al-Marsum bi-al-Durar al-Maknunat al-Nafisa*, Mecca, 1316/1898-99.



*Maktubat*, and he produced new Arabic versions<sup>1</sup> of the controversial letters, which did not however substantially solve the basic problem of the Mujaddid's original claims. Like Shaikh Adam Banuri, who was on a collision course with Shaikh Ahmad al-Qushshashi, Muhammad Beg engaged Barzanji and the '*ulama*' of Mecca and Medina in assiduous debates, thereby forcing more favourable opinions of the Mujaddid. In the midst of the controversy, Hasan bin Muhammad Murad al-Tunusi al-Makki wrote *al-'Arf al-nadi fi nusrat al-Shaikh Ahmad al-Sirhindi* in 1683, and another work defending the Mujaddid was written by Ahmad al-Bishbishi al-Misri al-Shafi'i al-Azhari. The main thrust of the arguments of the pro-Mujaddid scholars was directed against the charge of infidelity. In Syria Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghani bin Isma'il al-Nabulusi (1641/1713) wrote another work, *Natijat al-'ulum wa nasihat 'ulama' al-rusum*, criticising the Mujaddid.

During the eighteenth century the bitterness surrounding the Mujaddid's correspondence and sufis and '*ulama*' in Mecca gradually faded. Among sufis of that time was Shaikh Ibrahim's son, Shaikh Abu Tahir Muhammad, who refused to become embroiled in controversial issues and perhaps did not approve of the polemical stand of his ancestors.

A collection of the Mujaddid's works was taken by his Central Asian admirers to Bukhara and other Islamic centres in that region. The *Silsilatul-'auliya'* of Muhammad Tahir, completed in 1160/1747-48, states that Miyan Ahmad Sirhindi, the author of the *Maktubat*, travelled from India to Transoxiana where he visited sufi saints, most notably Maulana Lutifu'llah Chawsi, the leading *khalifa* of Dehbedi. After his return to India he was engaged for some years in the teachings of *ma'arifa*.<sup>2</sup> Obviously this fictitious journey by the Mujaddid was designed to offer some share in the Mujaddid's fame to Transoxiana.

In the eighteenth century the Mujaddid's letters were translated into Turkish by Mustaqim Zada Sulaiman Sa'du'd-Din and published in 1277/1860-61 in Istanbul. Similarly, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum's letters also were translated into Turkish and published.

In the early nineteenth century the Mujaddidiyyas became influential in Syria, Mecca and Medina after the decision of Syria's Maulana Khalid Kurdi to become initiated as a Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddiyya by Shah Ghulam 'Ali Mujaddidi. He arrived in Delhi in 1224/1809-10. Both then and after his return to Syria he was a dedicated Naqshbandiyya preacher. One of his disciples, Maulana Shami, the author of a book called the *Durr-i Mukhtas*, consisting of a collection of Hanafiyya *fatwas*, compiled a treatise on the life of his *pir*.

In the early seventeenth century, the banishment of Shaikh Nizam

<sup>1</sup>ibid, pp. 49-55.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad Tahir, *Silsilatul-'auliya'*, f. 244b.



Thaneswari from India by the Emperor Jahangir<sup>1</sup> made Balkh a strong Chishtiyya centre. After making a pilgrimage Shaikh Nizam returned to Bijapur where he received a warm welcome from Shaikh 'Isa Sindi<sup>2</sup> and his disciples. However, he did not take the risk of staying permanently in Burhanpur because of the Emperor's order of banishment against him, and he migrated to Balkh where the ruler, Imam Quli Khan, became his disciple. The Shaikh's enthusiasm for the Chishti form of *sama'*, which he himself introduced to Balkh, brought him into serious conflict with the '*ulama*'. Shaikh Nizam wrote a treatise on the subject, but the Sultan refused to take any action against his favourite.

Hagiological anecdotes such as the following highlight the Shaikh's zeal in crushing the Shi'is of the region and popularizing the *sama'*: Apparently the Shaikh never attended Friday congregational prayers in the Jami' mosque, performing them instead in his own *khanqah* surrounded by disciples. The local '*ulama*' used this as a pretext for launching an attack. The Shaikh argued that the Imam at the mosque was a Shi'i and therefore it was unlawful for a Sunni to stand behind him in prayer. The controversy sparked off a highly inflammatory situation in the town and the people declared that if the Shaikh was unsuccessful in proving the Imam a Shi'i they would kill both him and his patron, the Sultan. Under the leadership of the Imam a large mob besieged the Shaikh's *khanqah*. Calmly the Shaikh asked the Sultan to seize the Imam's shoes and tear away their linings. Inside each was a piece of paper containing the name of the first two Caliphs, 'Abu Bakr and 'Umar, revered by Sunnis and despised by Shi'is. Thus each time the Imam walked he was symbolically crushing beneath his feet the two revered Caliphs of the Sunnis. Convinced of the miraculous powers of the Shaikh, the mob turned on the Imam and murdered him. Although the story is typical of those related by both Shi'is and Sunnis to discredit the other side.<sup>3</sup> It does indicate the Shaikh's serious involvement in the fight to stop the spread of Shi'ism into Balkh from Herat in the east and Badakhshan in the north. Shaikh Nizam Thaneswari also relentlessly attacked both Jahangir and his son, Shahjahan, calling them heretics and atheists.<sup>4</sup> After his death the Shaikh was buried in Balkh.

In Mecca and Medina Shaikh Fazlu'llah's frequent visits, as well as his masterpiece, the *Tuhfa*, helped to popularize the Chishtiyya order. He wrote an Arabic commentary on his own works as did many other scholars, including Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ghani bin Isma'il al-Nablusi. The latter, as mentioned, also wrote a treatise attacking the Mujaddid.

<sup>1</sup>Shah Ra'uf Ahmad ed., *Makatib sharifa*, Madras, 1334/1915-16, pp. 36, 49.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, p. 266.

<sup>3</sup>cf. *Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, III, pp. 72-73.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 333b-34a; *Bahru'l-asrar*, India Office MS., ff. 343a-b.



The commentary on the *Tuhfa* which made the greatest impact in Indonesia was an exegesis by Qushshashi's disciple, Ibrahim Kurani. The *Tuhfa* itself was also drawn upon very heavily by Shaikh Shamsu'd-Din and Shaikh Raniri. Shaikh Kurani's commentary was written specifically for Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf who used it extensively in devising his theory of the five stages of descent of limitation (*ta'ayyunat*) of the Absolute in his *Daq'iq al-huruf*.

The prestige of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Ra'uf greatly popularized the *Tuhfa* not only in Sumatra but also among the Javanese, who in their enthusiasm to make the *Wahdat al-Wujud* intelligible to Javanese mystics, interpolated into Javanese translation of the *Tuhfa* elements of their own *suluk* which they understood so well. For example the Javanese version of the *Tuhfa* says:

All the Essences which are exterior  
are the effects of these Fixed Prototypes [*a'yan-sabita*]  
and [exist] through them, by definition,  
The Exterior Essences follow  
what is within the [Divine] Knowledge,  
the being of which is not created(?)  
and may only be seen in its generality.  
But (those Prototypes) which are within the Known  
have not altered to the vision of one who had attained,  
they are now as they were.  
Exterior being is called  
contingent being because it does not exist  
except through its reality.  
[Yet those Prototypes] which are within the Knowledge  
are not opposed [to the Essences without,] their being  
is the same.  
The relation of Visnu and Kresna  
is an illustration of this,  
for it is Visnu who is Kresna,  
The true Visnu takes a form becoming manifest in Kresna  
and is the reality that is Arja Kresna.<sup>1</sup>

A.H. Johns makes the following interesting comments on the interpolations. He says,

'There are some traces of Javanese cultural influence, however; in the first place, the metaphorical use of the relationship between Visnu and Kresna to describe that of God to the visible world...The question arises: does this metaphor prove an intimate knowledge of Indian theistic-

<sup>1</sup>Johns, A.H., *The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet*, Oriental Monograph Series, no. 1, The Australian National University, p. 35.



pantheistic religious ideas, or is it one more element that the writer has gathered into his fairly comprehensive net? The latter view seems the more probable. The figures of Visnu and Kresna would be familiar from the *wajang kulit* or shadow theatre, for the *wajang* was, and to a great extent is, the greatest single formative influence on Javanese religious thought and today is used even for the presentation of Christian doctrine as it also was for the presentation of Islam in the early days of Islam in Java—and was so used by the Malay mystic Hamzah. Zoetmulder has written an extremely interesting chapter on the *wajang* imagery in the Javanese *suluk* (Islamic mystical) literature, in which, the Kresna-Visnu metaphor was quite common, and parallel to it is the figure of Pandji as the form of God manifest in the world, but moving through it unrecognised. This metaphor of Pandji disguised as a *dalanag* (puppet master) and moving through the world unrecognized, occurs in the *Suluk Malang Sumirang* of which one stanza is quoted in our text... It is interesting to note, however, that our text gives the better version, and its reading of this particular stanza is supported by Zoetmulder's text. How the author happened to be familiar with this one stanza of a thoroughly Javanistic work, which may be an interpolation, is an interesting question, but this stanza, and two other uses of the Visnu-Kresna metaphor are the only clear instances of specific Javanese influence in the text. Thus, there seems no grounds for supposing any special knowledge of Indian theistic-pantheistic religious ideas on the author's part. He was drawing on the elements of mystical religious teachings he found scattered around him—the heterogeneity of which, the Primbons are sufficient example.<sup>1</sup>

Among Chishtiyya settlers in Medina in the seventeenth century the most important was Shaikh Muhi'u'd-Din Abu Yusuf Yahya Chishti, popularly known as Miyan Shaikh Yahya Chishti of Gujarat. The son of Shaikh Mahmud bin Shaikh Muhammad Chishti, he was born on 20 Ramazan 1010/14 January 1602. After completing his education at the age of twenty, he entered the army. Unlike his fellow soldiers he refused to plunder local villages for food, preferring hunger. After the death of his grandfather on 9 Rabi' I, 1040/16 October, 1630 he succeeded him in his spiritual position and renounced the world. During Aurangzib's viceroyalty of Gujarat (February 1645-January 1647), Miyan Shaikh Yahya repeatedly turned down the Prince's request for an interview. Finally when they did meet, Aurangzib requested advice on how to further the Islamic cause. The Shaikh gave a non-committal reply, implying that Islam would progress naturally without help, and a supporter of the Prince interpreted the reply as a prophecy of Aurangzib's succession to

<sup>1</sup>*The Gift Addressed to the Spirit of the Prophet*, pp. 16-18.



the throne. Before he ascended the throne Aurangzib used to send an annual gift of 200 rupees to the Shaikh. When he became Emperor the amount increased to one thousand rupees per annum.

The Shaikh's indulgence in *sama'* prompted the *muhtasib* of Gujarat to hinder him from organizing such a gathering and also recitals of *maulud*. The Shaikh refused to recognize their authority and ordered his disciples to show armed resistance to the *muhtasib*'s implementation of the imperial command. He then wrote a letter of complaint to the Emperor. Aurangzib sided with the Shaikh and ordered the Governor, Raja Jaswant Singh, and other high officials to warn the *muhtasib* not to meddle in controversial religious issues. This meant a total victory for the Shaikh; the Emperor's officers apologized to him on behalf of Aurangzib and then presented him with a gift of one thousand rupees and four *tolas* of gold.

Prior to his mother's death, Shaikh Yahya had made a pilgrimage to Mecca. After her death he left India permanently, living in Mecca and Medina in alternate years. In these cities the Shaikh's seminaries became great centres for Indian pilgrims and sufis, several of whom he initiated. After residing for fourteen years in Mecca and Medina Shaikh Yahya Chishti died on 28 Safar 1101/11 December 1689 at the age of ninety-one years.<sup>1</sup> His sons and grandsons remained in Medina, continuing in the family tradition of teaching and leading a retired mystic life. According to the *Ma'arifu'l-Wilayat*; the Chishtiyya order was popular in Arabia from the time of Fuzayl bin Iyaz,<sup>2</sup> Ibrahim bin Adham<sup>3</sup> and Khwaja 'Usman Harwani,<sup>4</sup> Shaikh Yahya being another welcome addition to the line of these illustrious sufis.<sup>5</sup>

Among eighteenth century scholars and sufis who left an indelible mark on the Islamic world was Saiyid Muhammad al-Murtaza ibn Muhammad Zabidi. Born in 1145/1732 in Bilgaram near Lucknow, his early education took place at Allahabad and Delhi. As a youth he made a pilgrimage, and also studied in Zabid (Yemen) under Saiyid 'Abdu'r-Rahman bin Mustafa Idrusi, who initiated him as an Idrusiyya. Although the people of Bilgaram, the Saiyid's hometown, generally called themselves Bilgaramis (of Bilgaram), Saiyid Murtaza chose to be known as Zabidi, after the birth-place of his teacher.

After travelling to Egypt Shaikh Murtaza began writing literary and mystical works. His *Taj al-'arus* was a commentary on the Arabic dic-

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'at-i Ahmadi*, supplement, pp. 79-83.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 33-34.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 115.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, f. 476a.



tionary of Abu'l Tahir -Majdu'd-Din Firuzabadi's (729/1329-817/1415) *al-Qamus al-muhit*. He also wrote a voluminous commentary on the *Ihya 'ulum al-din* of Ghazali under the title of *Ithaf al-sadat al-muttaqin* which aroused new interest in Ghazali in Egypt. He died there in 1205/1790-91.



## Chapter Seven

### The Sufi Conception of Kingship and Government

THE great historian and philosopher, Ibn Khaldun (732/1332-808/1406), well-known for his analysis of the complexities of *al-'umaran al-bashari* (human civilization) and the role of '*asabiyya*'<sup>1</sup> (kinship spirit or group feeling) observed that it was the solidarity inherent in various groups of men which led to the foundation of empires and dynasties. He wrote:

Royal authority is an institution that is natural to mankind. We have explained before that human beings cannot live and exist except through social organization and co-operation for the purpose of obtaining their food and (other) necessities of life. When they have organised, necessity requires that they deal with each other and (thus) satisfy (their) needs. Each one will stretch out his hand for whatever he needs and (try simply to) take it, since injustice and aggressiveness are in the animal nature. The others, in turn will try to prevent him from taking it, motivated by wrathfulness and spite and the strong human reaction when (one's own property is menaced). This causes dissension, (Dissension) leads to hostilities, and hostilities lead to trouble and bloodshed and loss of life, which (in turn) lead to the destruction of the (human) species. Now, (the human species) is one of the things the Creator has especially (told us) to preserve.<sup>2</sup>

Continuing to underline the importance of '*asabiyya*' he remarked:

Not every group feeling has royal authority, Royal authority, in reality, belongs only to those who dominate subjects, collect taxes, send out (military) expeditions, protect the frontier regions, and have no one over them who is stronger than they. This is generally accepted as the real meaning of royal authority.<sup>3</sup>

Ibn Khaldun observed that all ancient kings framed laws which concentrated mainly on the worldly interests of their subjects but that the

<sup>1</sup>Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, I, translated by Franz Rosenthal, New York, 1958. pp. 284-86, 296-302.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, I, pp. 380-81.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, pp. 381.



quest of human beings for the path of God drove them to follow divine laws; in the case of Islam, the *Shari'a*. Thus the caliphate of Muhammad's first four successors provided a process which enabled Muslims to act according to religious insight and was to all intents and purposes the substitute of government by the Lawgiver (Muhammad).<sup>1</sup> Although Sunni authorities offered innumerable religious explanations for the emergence of *mulk*<sup>2</sup> (kingship) after the end of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, Ibn Khaldun unequivocally asserted that the Umayyad struggle for power and the introduction of hereditary rule of succession were prompted mainly by the necessity to safeguard the unity of the Umayyad *'asabiyya* which was unwilling to accept any other solution.<sup>3</sup>

The 'Abbasids who came to power after a revolt against the Umayyads by the Khurasanians, a group of Arabs, Aramaeans and Persians all from southern Iraq and *mawalīs* or non-Arab converts to Islam not only capitalized on their descent from 'Abbas bin 'Abd al-Muttalib (d. 32/653), an uncle of the Prophet, but began claiming to be God's vicegerents on earth. Abu Yusuf (113/731-182/798), the famous disciple of Abu Hanifa (80/699-150/767), in his address to the Caliph Harun ur-Rashid (170/786-193/809) said:

"...Yea, God in His grace and mercy has appointed the rulers to be His vicegerents on earth and has granted them the light of wisdom to illuminate the eyes of their subjects as to their confused affairs and to make clear to them the rights to which they are doubtful. The light of the rulers shines in fixing punishments and in restoring rights to the owners thereof—after they have been proved, and by clear orders. However the revival of the study of precedents and traditions laid down by devout people is extremely important, for the revival of the study of law is one of the good deeds which endure and do not perish. The iniquity of the shepherd spells ruin for his flock, and his reliance other than on faithful and good persons spells disaster for the community. Complete the good which God has granted you O Commander of the Faithful, by redressing wrongs, and endeavour to increase it by giving thanks. For thus said God, blessed and exalted be He, in His precious book: "Assuredly if ye are thankful, I shall increase you, but if ye disbelieve, My punishment is severe."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Muqaddimah*, I, pp. 387-88.

<sup>2</sup>Al-Baladhuri and al-Tabari consider that the Khawarij threat was mainly responsible for the secular-hereditary character of the Caliphate; Ibn Qutayba al-Dinawari also endorses the same view, *Al-Imama wa'l Siyasa*, Cairo, 1937, pp. 113-15. Al-Dinawari condemns the change as illegal. Petersen, E.L., *'Ali and Mu'awiya in Early Arabic Traditions*, Copenhagen, 1964, pp. 145-46, 157, 167, 173.

<sup>3</sup>*Muqaddimah*, I, pp. 430-36.

<sup>4</sup>Abu Yusuf, *Kitab al-Kharaj*, excerpts from Ben Shemesh, A., *Taxation in Islam*, I, Leiden, 1965, p. 73.



Some twenty-one books bearing the title, *Kitab al-kharaj or Risala fi al-kharaj*, of which only three can still be traced<sup>1</sup> were not merely intended to revive the principles of taxation used by the first four caliphs but sought to sanctify the personality of the caliph, both as God's vicegerent on earth and as successor to Muhammad and the first four caliphs. The authors of these works were prominent jurists and the image of the ruler they presented aroused great enthusiasm among the orthodox.

These authors also put forward the theory that 'the original rights of ownership in land are God's and His Prophet's and then yours (*umma*) afterwards. He who revives dead land has the best claim to it.'<sup>2</sup> These works also defined the caliph's share in *ghanima* (booty),<sup>3</sup> *jizya* (a poll tax per head on all the adult males of *ahl al-zimma*, who were able to fight) and *kharaj* (tax on landed property as distinct from poll tax).<sup>4</sup>

What impressed the multi-racial society of the 'Abbasids and left an indelible mark on posterity, however, were the Arabic translations of the Pahlawi 'Mirrors for Princes' and their Islamicized versions written by scholars during the 'Abbasid Caliphate. This literary genre unequivocally asserted that rulers were divinely appointed monarchs who were accountable only to God. The jurists also maintained that God had made caliphs trustees of their people and that the happiest 'shepherd' before God on Judgment Day was he whose subjects had been content during his reign.

<sup>1</sup>Ben Shemesh, A., *Taxation in Islam*, II, Leiden, 1958, pp. 3-6.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, II, p. 65.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, II, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, II, pp. 28-44. A. Ben Shemesh says, "Though it (*kharaj*) is sometimes used to designate tax on landed property, as distinct from poll-tax levied on the heads of persons (*jizya*), we find all Muslim authors using it also in its original meaning of a general name for all kinds of taxes, Yahya, who uses it mostly in the meaning of 'land-tax,' makes use of it also as a name for general tax. Abu Yusuf, Abu Ubayd, Qudama, Khatib and Yahya also use '*Tasq*', '*Ushr*,' '*Jizya*' and '*Kharaj*' as synonyms." (*Taxation in Islam*, I, p. 6.) Ibn Batta, a tenth century jurist says, 'The Prophet, may God bless and save him, said to Abu Zarr, "Be patient, even if he be an Ethiopian slave." All the '*ulama*', whether jurists, scholars, devotees, pietists, or ascetics, from the beginnings of this community until our time, have agreed unanimously that the Friday prayers, the two festivals, the ceremonies of Mina and of 'Arafat, warfare against the infidels, the pilgrimage, and the sacrifices are incumbent under every *amir*, whether he be upright or an evildoer; that it is lawful to pay them the land tax, the legal alms and the tithe ('*ushr*'); to pray in the cathedral mosques which they build and to walk on the bridges which they construct. Similarly, buying and selling and other kinds of trade, agriculture, and all crafts, in every period and under no matter what *amir*, are lawful in conformity with the Book and the *Sunna*. The oppression of the oppressor and the tyranny of the tyrant do not harm a man who preserves his religion and adheres to the *Sunna* of his Prophet provided that he himself acts in conformity with the book and the *Sunna*, in the same way that if a man, under a just *imam*, makes a sale contrary to the Book and the *Sunna*, the justice of his *imam* will be of no avail to him. *Kitab al-Sharh wa'l-Ibzan 'ala usul al Sunna wa'l-diyana*', pp. 66-68 in Barnard Lewis, *Islam*, I, New York, 1974, p. 171.



Nevertheless the Muslim religious élite (*ahl al-ra'y*) while enforcing what was right and forbidding what was evil (*amr bi al-ma'ruf w-al-nahy 'an al-munkar*) could accuse a caliph of open violation of the *Shari'a*, even having him forcibly removed. This was legitimated by a saying of the Prophet Muhammad prescribing Muslims, 'Do not obey a creature against the Creator.'<sup>1</sup> Conversely, according to the authors of the 'Mirrors' there was no circumstance legitimizing disobedience to a ruler.

The earliest source for the 'Mirror' writers was the *Khuday-nama* and the *Ayin-nama*, translated into Arabic by Ibn al-Muqaffa'<sup>2</sup> (102/720-139/756) and the *Adab al-saghir*<sup>3</sup> also by the same author. In these works an original contribution to the theory of statecraft and monarchy was made. A lawbook<sup>4</sup> known as *Karnamak-i Artakhshtar-i Papakan* (The Covenant of Ardashir the Great Sasanian monarch) was also said to have been translated by Ibn al-Muqaffa'. An anonymous translation of the *Kitab al-taj*, ascribed to al-Jahiz (160/776-255/869) placing the ruler halfway between God and the faithful, appeared between 847 and 861. The material was heavily drawn upon by Ibn Qutayba<sup>5</sup> (213/828-276/889), the author of the *Kitab 'uyun al-akhbar*. The *Adab al-saghir* and the *Adab al-kabir* highlight Ardashir's famous maxim that religion and kingship are twin brothers, religion being the basis of kingship and kingship the protector of religion.<sup>6</sup> To Ibn al-Muqaffa' the role of the Sasanian kings and the

<sup>1</sup>Abu'l 'Ala' Maududi, Abu Hanifah and Abu Yusuf, in a *History of Muslim Philosophy*, edited by M.M. Sharif, I, Pakistan Philosophical Congress, 1963, pp. 687-88.

<sup>2</sup>Besides other works this Arabic author of Persian origin is well known for his translation of *Kalila wa Dimna*, the collection of Indian fables from the *Panchatantra* and the *Tantrakhayaka*, which he translated into Arabic from the Pahlawi. Although accused of heresy by the orthodox he was executed at the orders of the 'Abbasid Caliph Mansur (136/754-158/775) for his resentment against Ibn al-Muqaffa' for drafting a political document.

<sup>3</sup>The *Adab* literature in the 'Abbasid reign was a special genre representing works designed to teach urbanity and elegant manners indispensable for refined living in towns. It drew heavily on Pahlawi, Sanskrit and Hellenistic literature. The ethical, as well as didactic teachings of the *Adab* literature of Ibn al-Muqaffa' also became a handbook of social and political ethics for the Muslim élite.

<sup>4</sup>The 'Covenant of Ardashir' in Ibn Miskawayh's *Tajarib al-Umam* (pp. 99-127), the facsimile of a Constantinople manuscript printed for the trustees of the E.J.W. Gibb Memorial Series, London, 1909. See also the *Zafar-nama*, the alleged Persian version of Buzurgmihr's Pahlawi *andarz*, in *Chrestomathie Persane*, I, ed., Ch. Schefer, Paris, 1883.

<sup>5</sup>Abu Muhammad 'Abd Allah bin Muslim al-Dinawari, known as Ibn Qutayba, was a scion of an Arabized Iranian family of Khurasan. He was born at Kufa and lived at Baghdad where he was a famous teacher. Besides *adab* literature, he also compiled anthologies of Arabic poetry, a philological commentary on the Qur'an and wrote a very important work on the interpretation of *Hadith* entitled the *Kitab Ta'wil mukhtalif al-hadith*. The latter work and the *Kitab 'Uyun al-akhbar* contain Ibn Qutayba's political ideas.

<sup>6</sup>*Tajarib al-umam*, I, p. 102.



'Abbasid caliphs encompassed both temporal and religious lordships. The only authority superior to that of a ruler was religion and an ideal government was based on the latter, the worst type being one founded on a pursuit of hedonism and transient pleasure. A government based on power would also be racked with conflict and rebellion.<sup>1</sup> According to Ibn al-Muqaffa', however, the ruler was an absolute monarch who should be sagacious, resourceful, strong, God-fearing and eternally vigilant over his subjects. Servants of the ruler should be loyal and dedicated continually marvelling at their ruler's virtues in order that they become more firmly planted; in no circumstances should they disobey or rebel. In short, Ibn al-Muqaffa' advocated kings had been chosen by God and, receiving their authority directly from Him<sup>2</sup> replaced Him on earth while being agents for the execution of His justice.

It was, however, the completion of the *Shahnama* by Firdawsi (329-30/940-41—411/1020) in 400/1010 which gave a new impetus both to rulers and political theorists and was to become the most significant watershed in the history of Islamic political thought. As well as an account of the epic glory of the ancient Iranian kings, the *Shahnama* eloquently reminded kings and nobles that monarchs were instruments in the execution of God's will and that their commands, from the height of their thrones, were therefore inviolate. The God of the *Shahnama* was Omnipotent and Omniscient, the Creator of the Zoroastrians, Jews, Christians and Muslims, who endowed Kayumars (the founder of the ceremonial of throne and crown) with *Farr* (effulgence) suggesting the mystique of true kingship.<sup>3</sup> *Farr* symbolised divine favour which kings possessed as long as God did not deprive them of it. Thus Jamshid, one of the greatest legendary kings of ancient Iran, said to have invented a magic cup (*jam-i Jam*) in which he saw the universe and to have begun the tradition of the *nawruz* festival (New Year's day, when the sun enters the Aries), asserted that he himself was endowed with this divine *Farr* (*Farr-i Izadi*). He also believed he was simultaneously both king and priest (*mubad*) and would protect potential evil-doers from the wrong path and would guide their souls towards the light. Firdawsi related that Jamshid invented war weapons which he passed on to his valiant followers and that by virtue of his kingly *Farr* he was able to mould iron into helmets, chain-mail, and armour, missile-proof vests, swords and horse armour, all of them being the product of his perspicuous intellect.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Al-Muqaffa', *Al-Adab al-saghir wa'l adab al-kabir*, Beirut, 1961, pp. 63-64.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 71-72.

<sup>3</sup>*Chu amad bi burj-i hamal aftar*  
*jahan gasht ba farr u ayin u ab.*

<sup>4</sup>*manam guft ba farra-ye izadi*  
*hamam shahryari u ham mubadi*  
*badan ra zi bad dast kutah kunam*



The importance of *Farr* in relation to kingship was so significant that even the orthodox Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali (450/1058-505/1111) could not ignore it. In his *Nasihat al-muluk* on two separate occasions he drew attention to *Farr*. In the beginning of his chapter on 'Qualities required for Kings' Ghazali says:

To guide His slave to Him, He sent prophets; and to preserve them from one another, He sent kings, to whom He bound the welfare of men's lives in His wisdom and on whom He conferred high rank.

As you will hear in the Traditions (*Akhbar*), "The Sultan is God's shadow on earth", which means that he is high-ranking and the Lord's delegate over His creatures. It must therefore be recognized that this kingship and the divine effulgence (*Farr-i Izadi*) have been granted to them by God, and that they must accordingly be obeyed, loved and followed. To dispute with kings is improper, and to hate them is wrong; for God on High has commanded, (*Q*, IV, 62). "Obey God and obey the Prophet and those among you who hold authority," which means (in Persian) obey God and the prophets and your princes (*amiran*). Everybody to whom God has given religion must therefore love and obey kings and recognize that their kingship is granted by God, and given by Him to whom He wills. God Almighty stated this, in the verse (*Q*, III, 25): "Say, O God, owner of the sovereignty! (You give the sovereignty to whom You will, and You take it away from whom You will. You strengthen whom You will, and You humble whom You will. In Your hand is the choice of what is best. Verily You are powerful over everything)."

Ghazali then adds that divine effulgence is expressed in the following sixteen attributes and pursuits,

...intelligence, knowledge, sharpness of mind, ability to perceive things, perfect physique, literary taste, horsemanship, application to work, and courage; together with boldness, deliberation, good temper, impartiality towards the weak and the strong, friendliness, magnanimity, maintaining tolerance and moderation, judgement and foresight in business, frequent reading of the reports of the early Muslims (*salaf*), and constant attention to the Biographies of the Kings (*Siyar al-muluk*)<sup>1</sup> and inquiry concerning the activities of the Kings of Old; because the present world is the continuation of the empire of the

*rawan ra suy-i rawshani rah kunam*  
*nakhust alat-i jang ra dast burd*  
*dar-i nam-justan bi gurdan sipurd*  
*bi farr-i kay'i narm kard ahana*  
*chu khud u zirih kard u chun jushana.*

<sup>1</sup>Bagley suggests that perhaps the reference here is to the *Khudaynama*, which was known as Arabic as *Siyar al-muluk*. Bagley, F.R.C., *Ghazali's Book of Counsels for Kings, Nasihat al-muluk*, London, 1964, p. 74, note 7.



forerunners, who reigned and departed, each leaving a memory to his name and [acquiring] treasure in this life and the next.<sup>1</sup>

As pointed out by W. Montgomery Watt, the qualities listed by Ghazali resemble those mentioned by Farabi in his *Ara' ahl al-madinat al-fadila*.<sup>2</sup> Although Ghazali took great pains to demonstrate the incompatibility of the Neoplatonism of Farabi and Ibn Sina with orthodox Sunnism,<sup>3</sup> his political works show a strange wedlock between the ideas contained in the "Mirrors for Princes" and those in the works of Muslim philosophers. What is indeed remarkable is that Ghazali also recommended the need to draw on the glorious past of Iran described in such works as the *Siyar al-muluk* or the Arabic translation of the *Khudaynama*.

Ghazali also stated to be universal truths a number of traditions of doubtful authenticity and one such is contained in this quotation:

One day of just rule by an equitable Sultan is more meritorious than sixty years of continual worship . . . By God in the hand of Whose power lies Muhammad's soul, all actions of the just Sultan affecting his subjects are carried to heaven every day; and each prayer of his is worth seventy thousand prayers.<sup>4</sup>

Ghazali also endorsed Ardashir's proposition that, monarchy and religion are like twin brothers<sup>5</sup> and underlined the time-honoured saying of past sages (whom he failed to acknowledge by name), 'the character of subjects springs from the character of kings.'<sup>6</sup> He disputed the current belief among Muslims that they received the *Amirs* they deserved and affirmed that 'good men are good through the instrumentality of kings' and the 'conduct of mankind varies with their conduct'. Ghazali concludes:

You should know that there is a saying of the Sages that "the people of an epoch resemble their kings more than they resemble their epoch," and that there is a saying in the Traditions that "the people follow the religion of their kings."<sup>7</sup>

Considering the ancient Iranian kings to be paragons of virtue Ghazali extolled Chosroes Anushirwan,<sup>8</sup> (531-579) for his brand of justice. In

<sup>1</sup>*Counsels for Kings, Nasihat al-muluk*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 74, note 2.

<sup>3</sup>*Tahafut al-falasifa* (The Inconsistency of the Philosophers), completed in 488/1095.

<sup>4</sup>*Counsel for Kings (Nasihat al-muluk)*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. LXIV, 59.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 60.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 62.

<sup>8</sup>In his reign the 'mystique' of 'kings of kings' was reinforced by the 'Mirrors for Princes' and other writings. Burzoe, the physician of Chosroes, visited India and brought back the game of chess, plus many books, such as the fables of Bidpay, which were then translated into Pahlawi. He sought religious support for the social stratification of Iranian society into four classes and remitted head tax (an earlier form of *jiyza*) for a Jew if he converted to Zoroastrianism. Chosroes was also responsible for the massacre of Mazdakites who were fighting for a type of communist evolution.



Ghazali's opinion only the orthodox Calip 'Umar I (13/634-23/644) and the Umayyad 'Umar bin 'Abd al-'Aziz (99/717-101/720), could be compared with Anushirwan. Ghazali frankly admitted, 'Kingship remains with the unbeliever but not with injustice' and cautioned rulers, 'Desertion and ruin of a territory result from two things: royal weakness and royal tyranny, each of which caused hardship among *dihqans*.'<sup>1</sup>

Ghazali lived in Tus during the reign of the Great Saljuqs. Tughril (429/1038-455/1062), the founder of this dynasty, gained control of Baghdad in 447/1055, after he obtained from the Caliph confirmation of the title, Sultan, assumed by him at Nishapur in 429/1038. His successors, Alp Arslan (455/1063-465/1072) and Malikshah I (465/1072-485/1092), were great rulers. Their vast empire extended from Khwarazm and modern Afghanistan to the greater part of Iran and Syria. A branch of the Saljuqs ruled Anatolia from 470/1077 to 707/1307. Although orthodox Sunnis, their ambition to achieve independent rule had prompted realists like Ghazali to admit that:

... Muslims did not elevate the Hashimites and Umayyads in order to bow down to them and worship them, but that having appointed them to be the rulers the Muslims obeyed and followed them, because obedience (to the ruler) is (a form of) worship of God.<sup>2</sup>

Ghazali discussed the institution of the caliphate in a number of works, consistently demonstrating that the *Shari'a* made the appointment of an Imam obligatory. To him the institution symbolized the collective unity of the Muslim community and its historical continuity, and he argued that the current situation made a change in the prescribed conditions for the election of a caliph permissible.<sup>3</sup> He affirmed that the validity of government by sultans depended on their oaths of allegiance to the caliphs as adhered to by the Saljuqs. However, Ghazali also understood that necessity made lawful what was in fact prohibited. As noted by H.A.R. Gibb, 'Ghazali with his usual frankness and robust common sense, breaks through the sham and defines the position as facts had made it'. He quotes Ghazali:

An evildoing and barbarous sultan, so long as he is supported by military force, so that he can only with difficulty be deposed and that the attempt to depose him would cause unendurable civil strife, must, of necessity, be left in possession and obedience must be rendered to

<sup>1</sup>*Counsel for Kings*, p. 62. In the Sasanian period *dihqans* were village heads and derived their power from hereditary titles on the local level. Under the Arabs they embraced Islam and were the principal intermediaries between the village revenue paying classes and their Arab masters.

<sup>2</sup>Goldziher, I., *Streitschrift des Gazali gegen die Batinijja-Sekta*, Leiden, 1916, p. 81, quoted in *Counsels for Kings*, p. LIII.

<sup>3</sup>Leonard Binder, Al-Ghazali in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, I, pp. 781-82.



him, exactly as obedience must be rendered to emirs . . . . We consider that the Caliphate is contractually assumed by that person of the 'Abbasid house who is charged with it, and that the function of government in the various lands is carried out by means of Sultans, who owe allegiance to the Caliph . . . . Government in these days is a consequence solely of military power, and whosoever he may be to whom the holder of military power gives his allegiance, that person is the Caliph. And whosoever exercises independent authority, so long as he shows allegiance to the Caliph in the matter of his prerogatives of the *Khutba* and *Sikka*, the same is a sultan, whose commands and judgments are valid in the several parts of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

Documents issued in the reign of the Saljuqs also used the terms *jahandar* (monarch) and *jahandari* (monarchy) and stressed the fact that the principal duty of kings was to restore prosperity in a kingdom by dispensing justice and equity. They also underlined the interdependence of kingship and religion and emphasized the point that subjects were entrusted to a sultan's care by God and that it was a binding duty of them to ensure their protection.<sup>2</sup> As the Saljuq sultans had embarked on the annihilation of the Isma'ilis and other non-Sunni sects, justice, impartiality, the protection of subjects and obedience to the laws of the *Shari'a* applied to, and promoted the interests of, Sunnis alone.

Besides the political teachings of the 'Mirror' writers (particularly those of Ghazali) the influence of the Hanbali jurist, Ibn Taymiyya (661/1263-728/1328) of Damascus, who was not always supported by his rulers, was also very significant. His determined war against sufi innovation and Shi'is, in conjunction with his leadership to repel the Mongol threat to Damascus in 699/700-1300-01, raising the cry of *jihad*, greatly enhanced his prestige. Between 711/1311 and 714/1315 he wrote the *Kitab al-Siyasat al-Shari'a* enthusiastically arguing for the need for a government based on the *Shari'a*, which he believed bridged the gulf between the spiritual and temporal authorities. Naturally, according to him the ideal Islamic state was to be run solely under the '*ulama's* guidance.<sup>3</sup>

Maulana Jalalu'd-Din Rumi (b. Rabi' I 604/September 1207, d. Jumada II 672/December 1273) explained the relations between the kings and the '*ulama*' this way,

The Prophet on whom be peace, said: The worst of scholars is he who visits princes, and the best of princes is he who visits scholars. Happy is the prince who stands at the poor man's door, and wretched is the poor man who stands at the door of the prince.

<sup>1</sup>Ghazali, *Ihya' 'ulum al din*, in H.A.R. Gibb, *Islamic Society and the West*, reprint, London, 1960, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Muntajab al-Din Badi' Atabeg, Juwaini, *Atabat al-kataba*, edited by 'Abbas Iqbal, Tehran, 1329/1950, pp. 9, 30, 33, 74.

<sup>3</sup>*Kitab al-siyasa al-shari'a*, Cairo 1951, pp. 2, 9, 10, 165, 167, 174.



People have taken the outward sense of these words to signify that it is not right for a scholar to visit a prince, lest he should become amongst the worst of scholars. That is not their true meaning, as they have supposed. Their meaning is rather this: that the worst of scholars is he who accepts help from princes, and whose welfare and salvation is dependent upon and stems from the fear of princes. Such a man first applies himself to the pursuit of learning with the intention that princes should bestow on him presents, hold him in esteem, and promote him to office. It was therefore on their account that he consented to better himself and converted from ignorance to knowledge. When he became a scholar, he was disciplined by the fear of them and was subject to their control. Willy-nilly, then, he comports himself in conformity with the way which they have mapped out for him. Consequently, whether it is the prince who formally visits him or he goes to visit the prince, he is in every case the visitor and it is the prince who is visited.<sup>1</sup>

In India Ziya'u'd-Din Barani (b. 684/1285-86, d. after 758/1356), whose grandfather, father and uncle had held high posts during the reigns of Delhi sultans from Balban to 'Ala'u'd-Din Khalji and who himself was a *nadim* (boon companion) of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq, wrote two important works, the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* and the *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*. Although the *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* is a history of the Delhi Sultans from Balban to the sixth year of Firuz Shah's reign, like his *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*, it was also intended to be an Indian 'Mirror for Princes' as the same political theories are expressed in both works. In his *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* the political ideologies are discussed in monologues and dialogues of the sultans and in the *Fatawa-i-Jahandari* political concepts again feature through the use of stories from the Arabic and Persian 'Mirrors for Princes.' Most of these have not survived and some may be apocryphal.

The *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* rationalizes both the absolutism of kings and their use of state laws (*Zawabit*). Barani unhesitatingly calls the first four successors of the Prophet Muhammad, *jahandars*<sup>2</sup> (world rulers), noting that each one strictly observed the practices of the Prophet Muhammad. As human beings, according to Barani, they combined the grandeur of Jamshid with the dervishhood of mystics. After this period caliphs and Muslim kings found themselves in the following dilemma. If they followed the practices of the Prophet Muhammad, they were unable to govern; conversely, if they ruled vigorously and ostentatiously like Chosroes, they would be forced to violate religious law. To Barani spiritual life was

<sup>1</sup>A.J. Arberry, *Discourses of Rumi*, London, 1961, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>*Jahandar-i-jahaniyan shudand. Fatawa-i Jahandari*, edited by A.S. Khan, Lahore, 1972, p. 140.



to be attained only through humility, poverty and self-abasement, whereas to the king his pride, arrogance and self-glorification were indispensable, which rendered the co-existence of spirituality and kingship impossible. A monarch, he added, could not survive without exhibiting divinity (*rububiyya*) and therefore to Barani kingship was the deputyship (*niyabat*) and vicegerency (*khilafat*) of God. Muslim *khalifas* and kings in the interests of propagating the word of God, enforcing the faith of Muhammad, annihilating the enemies of the faith and their self-preservation, were compelled to adopt the manners and customs of the great Iranian Emperors. He compared this situation with the eating of carrion prohibited by Islam but in the event of extreme conditions, permitted, in the same way that Muslim kings (in the interests of Islam) were allowed arrogance and ruthlessness. Using this example Barani added that even such non-Islamic customs as ceremonial prostration (Iranistyled), the amassing of huge amounts of treasure and the collection of large harems, could be accepted.<sup>1</sup>

Commenting on the history of Muslim rulers Barani observed that the Rightly Guided Caliphs governed according to the assent of the *ijma'*<sup>2</sup> and *istikhlaf*;<sup>3</sup> however from the time of the reigns of the Umayyads, the policy of annihilating the 'Alids ushered in a new era of anarchy.<sup>4</sup> From then until his own period Barani argued that the reign of many Muslim kings was short-lived and dynastic changes were the order of the day. Conversely the governments of the Iranis or the Byzantines were more stable and they were never forced to submit to rulers from alien races.<sup>5</sup> Barani therefore affirmed that kings should be members of noble dynasties and should promote an élite from among those highly born to the reins of power.<sup>6</sup> Barani knew that the Qur'an affirmed, 'Lo! the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the best in conduct'<sup>7</sup> but he interpreted the verse to mean that the lowly-born could never develop the degree of piety which was the sole prerogative of the nobly-born.<sup>8</sup>

Barani reaffirmed his belief that the theories on monarchy outlined in the 'Mirrors for Princes' such as 'the sultan is God's shadow on earth,' 'religion and kingdom are twin brothers' and 'people follow the faith of

<sup>1</sup>*Fatawa-i Jahandari*, pp. 140-41.

<sup>2</sup>According to Sunni juristic theories, *ijma'* is the most important basis of *Fiqh*. In theory *ijma'* means the agreement of the *umma* to a regulation (*hukm*) imposed by God. The election of Abu Bakr was based on *ijma'*.

<sup>3</sup>Appointing a successor, as was done by Abu Bakr who designated 'Umar as Caliph.

<sup>4</sup>*Fatawa-i Jahandari*, p. 306.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 303.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 304.

<sup>7</sup>*Qur'an*, XLIX, 13.

<sup>8</sup>*Fatawa-i Jahandari*, p. 298.



their kings' were true. However his exaggerated emphasis on nobility of birth was intended to discourage rulers from counteracting the pressure and dominance of the noble-born by raising up a lowly-born governing class.<sup>1</sup> The Hindu class and caste system strengthened the social prejudices Barani had borrowed from the Persian 'Mirrors.' He endorsed the Iranian custom of promulgating state laws, advising rulers to strictly refrain from associating with the lowly-born in his legislative counsels. As far as possible state laws should not violate the Shari'a and the *Sunna* but in a matter of expediency Barani recommended this should be no hindrance. Expiation could always be extended by way of lavish gifts.<sup>2</sup>

The Badshah-i Islam (Muslim Ruler) to Barani could not justify his existence and his divine commission without depriving Hindus of higher posts and by forcing the Brahmans (whom he compared to the Muslim 'ulama') into bankruptcy and social misery. Those who departed from orthodox Sunnism and most notably the Isma'ilis and Muslim philosophers were to be annihilated, so as to glorify Sunni Islam in India and to make it the leading religion. According to Barani this made the autocratic form of the rule of the Delhi sultans justified and religious.

Barani was both a sufi and a courtier who had made a study of a large number of 'Mirrors for Princes,' some of which he only vaguely remembered when writing his own book. In view of the repetitive nature of this genre, however, this was not a significant drawback for he in fact was well aware of the most crucial points in these works. He used his vast knowledge as well as his own personal political experience to justify royal absolutism. To him only the first four Caliphs of the Prophet were legitimate Muslim rulers.

Between the reigns of Timur and Akbar two major trends in political ideology crystallized, one being primarily Ghazalian and the other based on the works of Khwaja Nasir'u-d-Din Tusi (597/1201-672/1274). The most prominent contribution to the Ghazalian school was made by the *Zhakhirat al-muluk* of the sufi missionary, Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani (714/1314-786/1385). In his works on kingship the Saiyid observed that men were differently illuminated through the light of the divine attributes of *jamal* (beauty) and *jalal* (majesty) because of their instinctive differences, in turn leading to variation in the characteristics and beliefs of different communities. Some easily accepted guidance while others were stubborn, exhibiting their innate vices. It was the need to overcome the conflicts and dissensions within human nature that had prompted God to appoint a just ruler in order that he might guide human beings to follow the *Shari'a* and strike a balance between the élite and commoners.

<sup>1</sup>*Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, pp. 503-5.

<sup>2</sup>*Fatawa-i Jahandari*, pp. 218-20.



The main duty to rulers was to prevent the weak from the tyranny of the strong.<sup>1</sup>

In Adam, continued the Mir, prophethood, the sultanate and government were united. As prophets were free from lust and self-will, only pious souls could be appointed to such an exalted office. They were few in number and after Muhammad only the first four caliphs ruled righteously. Rulers in general were dominated by lust and greed, perpetrating oppression and victimization, believing brute force an inevitable appendage to their governments. Quoting some anecdotes relating to different rulers, the Mir advised Muslim kings to reconstitute their governments on the pattern of the rule of the prophets and the Rightly Guided Caliphs. In such a regime kingly authority was united with the life of a dervish. He reminded them that the sultans were chosen by God Himself and were His shadow. Being deputies of a Merciful God, their rule could be rationalized only through justice and benevolence. If they fell victim to lust and animal passions and indulged in violation of the laws of the *Shari'a*, they broke their trust as deputies and took up the path of the devil.<sup>2</sup>

Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani enumerated the following essentials for a good Islamic ruler:

1. While considering a petition, he should place himself in the position of his subject and make the decision according to what he would have himself liked if he were the petitioner.
2. Satisfying the needs of Muslims should be the highest form of worship in a government.
3. In matters of food and dress he should follow the traditions of the Rightly Guided Caliphs.
4. He should be polite and should not be vexed by lengthy petitions and discussions.
5. He should not hesitate to enforce the *Shari'a* in order to please all sections of his subjects, for in every regime half of the subjects were dissatisfied with the ruler. He should note that if God was satisfied with his orders and His words were elevated, the satisfaction of his subjects would follow automatically.
6. He should not ignore the fact that through government kings could acquire either felicity or damnation. The pride of worldly power drove most kings to destroy their faith, so through justice and righteousness kings should earn happiness for the world to come.
7. Kings should leave no stone unturned in their search for those who

<sup>1</sup>*Zakhirat al-muluk* (Tashkent Oriental Institute MS. 2312/1, copied in 991/1582), f. 53b.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 54a-58b.



were pious among the '*ulama*' and dervishes from whose company they should profit.

8. Kings should not frighten off their subjects by a show of vanity and ostentation but should win their hearts by their benevolence and justice.
9. Rulers should not allow tyrannical and dishonest officers to molest their subjects and should redress the evils inflicted on them.
10. The king should penetrate the truth of disputes laid before him and deliver judgements in accordance with the *Shari'a*; he should not be misled by the statement of witnesses and what appeared to be *prima facie* as correct.<sup>1</sup>

Written by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi to Sultan Sikandar Lodi, the letter incorporated the teachings of Ghazali and reminded him that kingship was the noblest of all callings and the epitome of all vocations such as those of the sufis, holy men, '*ulama*', pious members of the Muslim community, warriors for the faith and seekers of the Infallible Court. As the survival of the body depended on life, so the existence of the world was dependent of sultans. Without them, said the Shaikh, reiterating an old adage, people would have devoured each other. It was efficacious that strict administration and fear of the sword weeded out the sinful and wicked, but it was also essential that the Sultan should act as a patron of the weak, the pious, the '*ulama*' and the sufis.<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Ali Muttaqi in his *Kanz al-'Ummal* drew attention to the following traditions ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad.

Hear and obey, even if a shaggy-headed black slave is appointed over you.

Whosoever shall try to divide my community, strike off his head.

If allegiance is sworn to two Caliphs, kill the other. He who sees in his ruler something he disapproves should be patient, for if anyone separates himself from the community, even by a span, and dies, he dies the death of a pagan.

Obey your rulers, whatever happens. If their commands accord with the revelation I brought you, they will be rewarded for it, and you will be rewarded for obeying them; if their commands are not in accord with what I brought you, they are responsible and you are absolved. When you meet God, you will say, 'Lord God! No evil.' And He will say, 'No evil!' And you will say, 'Lord God! Thou didst send us Prophets, and we obeyed them by Thy leave; and Thou didst appoint over us Caliphs, and we obeyed them by Thy leave; and Thou didst place over us rulers, and we obeyed them for Thy sake.' And He will

<sup>1</sup>*Zakhirat al-muluk*, ff. 59a-62b.

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus' letter to Babur, *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, Delhi, 1871, pp. 335-37.



say, 'You speak the truth. They are responsible, and you are absolved.' If you have rulers over you who ordain prayer and the alms tax and the Holy War for God, then God forbids you to revile them and allows you to pray behind them.

If anyone comes out against my community when they are united and seeks to divide them, kill him, whoever he may be.

He who dies without an Imam dies the death of a pagan, and he who throws off his obedience will have no defense on the Day of Judgment. Do not revile the Sultan, for he is God's shadow on God's earth, Obedience is the duty of the Muslim man, whether he likes it or not, as long as he is not ordered to commit a sin. If he is ordered to commit a sin, he does not have to obey.

The nearer a man is to government, the further he is from God; the more followers he has, the more devils; the greater his wealth, the more exacting his reckoning.

He who commends a Sultan in what God condemns has left the religion of God.<sup>1</sup>

A sixteenth century exponent of the political programme of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar was Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Khwajigi of Transoxiana. He assumed in his works the role of king-maker in order to foster the development of the spiritual and material welfare of Sunnis. Of his several treatises, the *Tanbihu's-salat* is on the Ghazalian model. In it he wrote that sultans, who were also known as *khalifas*, were the manifestation of the caliphate and kingship of God. Justice amounted to the strengthening of both the *Shari'a* and the sufic path of the Prophet Muhammad. Sultans should promote the interests of the *Shari'a* and the *Tariqa*. Khwajigi also asserted that he personally was commissioned by God to associate with kings and promote the cause of the *Shari'a* and the *Tariqa*.<sup>2</sup>

Khwajigi invited Babur to believe that outstanding sufis who were responsible for the maintenance of the world had elected from among the sultans 'Ubaydullah Khan Uzbek as *khalifa*. Forming an electoral college of sufis they then sent to him (Khwajigi) an eminent mystic, informing him of their unanimous decision and seeking his co-operation. Khwajigi advised Babur of his decision to obey and hoped Babur would also concur.<sup>3</sup> This curious method of electing the caliph was ignored by Babur; perhaps it was never even conveyed to the Sultan in Turkey and merely indicated a developing involvement of the sufis in politics.

Having learnt that Jahangir was interested in a knowledge of the Prophet's traditions on kingship, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis

<sup>1</sup>Translated by B. Lewis, *Islam*, I, New York, 1974, pp. 150-51.

<sup>2</sup>*Tanbihu's-salat* in *Majmu'a* by Khwajigi, Leningrad Oriental Institute.

<sup>3</sup>*Baburiyya* in the above *Majmu'a*.



Dihlawi (958/1515-1052/1642) wrote a treatise, the *Nuriyya-i sultaniyya*, which covered all the traditions on this subject. Although a trained *Hadis* scholar he never questioned the authenticity of traditions popular from the time of Ghazali and wrote:

... on rank is higher than that of a king, and all words of conventional praise are insufficient to return thanks to him . . . the order and arrangement of worldly affairs depends upon the king. Were every king to go into retirement, the cosmic order would be shattered. Therefore kings should so regulate their activities that their existence is not a source of disorder.<sup>1</sup>

However Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq extolled only the *badshah-i dindar* (the king who upholds the Faith) who in the fulfilment of his duty strengthens the *Shari'a*. He continued:

"the religion and holy law which Prophets receive from God are made illustrious by kings through the strength of their arms and through the justice they dispense. The entire community should co-operate with the king in the task of strengthening the *din* (faith) and spreading it, The '*ulama*' should help by expounding the laws of the *Sahri'a*, the dervishes should engage themselves in prayers and worship, the army should fight for the faith and artisans, cultivators and merchants should actively perform their duties. The king is their (the people's) ruler and his justice preserves order among them. It is in this sense that the relationship between the king and the pillars of the world and mankind is equated with the relationship between body and soul. If the soul is reformed, the body is reformed; if the soul goes wrong, the body goes wrong."<sup>2</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq's theory legitimizing the existence of a king became narrowed down to the exclusive benefit of Islam when he considered whether heretics and unbelievers had an equal right of justice. He thought that *kufr* (heresy) was incompatible with justice and that a *kafir* (heretic) could never be known as an '*adil* (just ruler). At the same time, however, when reminded of Nushirwan, a non-Muslim renowned for his justice, the Shaikh, like Ghazali, admitted that justice was not the sole monopoly of Islam. However, he restrained himself from carrying the argument any further as Akbar and Jahangir dispensed even-handed justice. The following tradition which both Ghazali and Nizamu'l-Mulk Tusi (408/1018-485/1092) quoted in their works:

Sovereignty endures even when there is unbelief,

but will not endure when there is injustice

was generally underestimated by the orthodox Sunni revivalist missionary, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq.

<sup>1</sup>*Nuriyya-i sultaniyya*, India Office Library, Delhi, Persian collection, ff. 6-11a, 14a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 10b-11a.



Sultans were the *khalifas* (successors) of the Prophet Muhammad<sup>1</sup> to the Shaikh, and he said that it was their duty to obey the laws of the *Shari'a* and to follow the directives of the righteous '*ulama*' who were free from villainy and deceit.<sup>2</sup> The king should consider the Muslim treasury to be a trust fund to be drawn on only for items authorized by the *Shari'a*.<sup>3</sup> Moreover they should not levy unauthorized tax on the peasantry, according to the *Shari'a*. Conditions should be created to enable them to comfortably and cheerfully devote their energies to agriculture. Tax relief for cultivators was more praiseworthy than the same amount being dispensed in charity to dervishes. The only form of charity pleasing to God and meritorious on the Day of Judgment was that strictly performed within the bounds of the *Shari'a*. The most generous was he who did not care for worldly riches. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq reminded rulers that to them peasants were as important as an army, adding that according to the *Shari'a*, *jizya*, like *kharaj*, was compulsory and should be realized without harshness or oppression. The income from mines and the discovery of hidden treasure should also be spent according to the laws of the *Shari'a* and he concluded that a healthy state treasury depended on tranquillity among the peasantry, while the morale of the army corresponded to a treasury administered according to the *Shari'a*.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq also wrote letters to a number of nobles of Jahangir's reign, restating these points. During the early part of his reign the Mujaddid also wrote to leading political figures that the accession of the new Emperor offered them a golden opportunity to streamline the administration in accordance with the *Shari'a* and that this opportunity should not be lost.<sup>5</sup>

In a letter to Shaikh Farid Bukhari the Mujaddid wrote that in relation to the rest of the world a monarch could be compared to the heart inside the body. If the heart were healthy so was the rest of the body, but if diseased the whole balance was disturbed. A virtuous king could reform the entire world; similarly his wickedness would permeate it.<sup>6</sup> Reminding the Khan-i Jahan Lodi of this point he stated that any attempt to reform a king amounted to a regeneration of all mankind. Therefore all means should be employed to teach him Sunni ideals and how to repudiate the false religions of Islam's enemies.<sup>7</sup>

In another letter to the highest Muslim religious dignitary in the Empire and a friend of the Emperor, Sadr-i-Jahan, the Mujaddid wrote that as kings were benefactors of mankind the latter was indebted to its rulers. During Akbar's reign the change of government policy had shattered the

<sup>1</sup>*Nuriyya-i sultaniya*, f. 20a.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, f. 23a.

<sup>5</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 47, 48, 53, 54, 103, 163, 165, 213, 269.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, I, 47.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, ff. 21b-22a.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, ff. 17a-19a.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, II, 67.



aggressive side of Islam and therefore it was imperative that leading religious dignitaries and the '*ulama*' should devote their full energies to the reintroduction of the laws of the *Shari'a* and the restoration to their rightful positions of the fallen pillars of Islam. Should Muslim rulers fail to evince enthusiasm for the promotion of the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad and should their leading religious dignitaries in their own self-interest avoid taking effective steps in this direction the task should be delegated to dervishes.<sup>1</sup>

When corresponding, this time with Shaikh Farid Bukhari, the Mujaddid wrote that as Jahangir was uninterested in the question of infidelity, he should be informed of the repercussions resulting from the vicious customs followed by Hindus, as he was possibly ignorant of these facts.

The Mujaddid presumed that Akbar was an enemy of Islam, although the same charge did not apply to the whole of Jahangir's reign. Whatever enmity remained in Jahangir's reign was due to ignorance, making it a necessity to educate and reform the ruler. His attempts to change Jahangir towards the path of strict Sunnism the Mujaddid called the *jihad-i Qawli* (*ihad* by persuasion or teaching) and to him it ranked higher than war against infidels,<sup>2</sup> although he did believe the *Shari'a* could be glorified through the sword as well. Misguided and greedy '*ulama*' he believed, were responsible for the alleged downfall of Islam in Akbar's reign and he persuaded some of Jahangir's courtiers to urge the Emperor to choose a pious and honest '*alim*' to be the final arbiter for the interpretation of the *Shari'a*, for he believed that members of the '*ulama*' class were responsible for both the salvation and ruin of the Muslim<sup>3</sup> community.

To the Mujaddid *jizya* was essentially a discriminatory tax designed to vilify and insult non-Muslims. Early in Jahangir's reign he wrote to Lala Beg, the Governor of Bihar, that although Hindus were likely to pay *jizya* they would never willingly accept cow slaughter. However, as the killing of cows glorified Islam the practice should never be abandoned.

Diametrically opposed to the Mujaddid's theory of kings and their associated responsibilities was Miyan Mir whose ideas were based on the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Like Abu'l Fazl<sup>4</sup> and his followers, Miyan Mir considered an Emperor as a Perfect Man. He said:

Kings hold the status of the Perfect Man and were the chosen representatives for the self-manifestation of the Absolute. Nevertheless the Emperor's visits to him (Miyan Mir) did not upset his routine. As usual he was engaged in meditation. Nothing disturbed a perfect sufi and nothing was harmful to him. He himself was a king and therefore did

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 195.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, 53, 195.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, 65.

<sup>4</sup>*RIH*, pp. 352-73.



not attach any importance to an earthly king. All such kings were subordinate to him.<sup>1</sup>

To Miyan Mir, only the Muslims were not just rulers and, before discussing religious matters with Shahjahan he would invite him to remember that it was the duty of a just king to be vigilant of the interests of one's subjects (that is, the peasantry) and one's empire, for if all were content and the kingdom thrived, the army was stable and the treasury full.

Hazrat Bari, one of the *pirs* of Dara-Shukoh, also urged his royal disciple to care for the cultivators whose taxes swelled the imperial treasury.<sup>2</sup>

Designing his theory of kingship to justify his own accession to the throne and to gain support for his rule from orthodox Sunnis, Aurangzib (1068/1658-1118/1707) claimed that since 'all actions were determined by the will of God' his victory over his brothers was a divine gift. He says that the man who was assisted by God in accordance with the Qur'anic verse: O Allah! Owner of Sovereignty (*mulk*)! Thou givest sovereignty to whom Thou wilt, and Thou withdrawest sovereignty from whom Thou wilt,' was really great. From his prison Shahjahan accused Aurangzib of usurpation, to which he replied:

Perhaps Your Majesty's '*ulama*' have not advised Your Majesty of the correct position (about kingship) under the *Shari'a* . . . the treasury and property of kings and sultans are meant to satisfy the needs of the country and community; they are not private property and not an inheritance and therefore *zakat* is not levied on them. God most High selects someone from among the esteemed ones of His Court for the management of matters relating to the livelihood and destiny of mankind, under whose control He places the duties of binding and loosing, so that all sorts of people should lead their life on the basis of equity.<sup>3</sup>

Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din, the son of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud Naqshbandi who completed his *Kanzu's-sa 'adat* in 1072/1661-62 included in it an epilogue on justice affirming that kings should be benevolent and just to all their subjects without discrimination between the deserving and non-deserving. Like Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani, the Khwaja argued that a sultan was the shadow of God and like Him should dispense equal justice<sup>4</sup> among both Muslims and infidels. The Khwaja also reproduced from the *Zakhiratu'l-muluk* of Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani the guidelines laid down by the author in relation to the treatment of Muslims and non-Muslims which affirmed that *zimmis* should be governed strictly in

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>*Hasanatu'l-arifin*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>3</sup>*Adab-i 'Alamgiri*, British Museum MS., Or, 177, ff. 300a, b.

<sup>4</sup>*Kanzu's-sa 'adat*, Tashkent MS., ff. 267a-268b, HSI, pp. 295-96.



accordance with the covenant of 'Umar. Modern researchers have, however, proved this to be a document written later than the time of the second Caliph which in fact embodied the intolerant ideas of ninth century jurists.<sup>1</sup>

The political views of Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid included the belief that, as long as Jahangir did not reject Islam and was a major source of strength to the Muslims of his empire, he (the Diwan) would make the drinking of liquor lawful for the Emperor, even accepting the consequences of such an act on the Day of Judgment.<sup>2</sup>

From the first moment on his arrival on the Indian scene, Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Shattari emulated the precedent established by Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar. Basically this amount to furthering his mission by an attempt to control the prevailing political powers. In Jaunpur and Bengal he was successful, but this was not the case in Malwa. On the other hand, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus offered unswerving loyalty to the Muslim rulers from Babur to Akbar, and his brother, Shaikh Phul, met a tragic death in the service of Humayun. The sons of Muhammad Ghaus and some of his relatives were members of Akbar's government; however, during the reigns of Jahangir and Shahjahan they led an ascetic life and avoided siding with one or other of the various political factions. Shaikh Burhan Shattari quite firmly informed Prince Aurangzib that the prayers of dervishes would not assist his quest for the throne, at the same time advising him to implement justice and to care for the social and economic welfare of his subjects were he to ascend the throne. Thus he followed the political ideals of Miyan Mir and remained withdrawn from the practical side of politics.<sup>3</sup>

Members of the Chishtiyya order traditionally considered themselves to be the patron saints of the Muslim rulers of India. The rise of the Shattariyyas during Humayun's reign was a temporary set-back, later offset by the intense devotion of his son, Akbar, to two Chishtis, the deceased Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din of Ajmer and Shaikh Salim, whom the Emperor elevated to the heights of India's leading sufi-saint.

Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari wrote a treatise in Arabic on the orthodox Islamic revenue system, stating that the proprietary rights of agricultural land in India could be divided into at least eight different categories and it was wrong to introduce one uniform system for all types of land rights. Although the Chishtiyya disciples in Gangoh and Thaneswar after the banishment for political reasons of Shaikh 'Abdu'n-Nabi, a grandson of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi. In turn Shaikh Jalal Thaneswari

<sup>1</sup>Arnold, T.W., *The preaching of Islam*, 2nd ed., Lahore, 1956, p. 57; A.S. Triton. *The Caliphs and their non-Muslim subjects*, 2nd ed., London, 1970, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, ff. 192b-193b.

<sup>3</sup>*MRM*, pp. 370-72.



discussed with the Emperor the Ghazalian idea that kings were to be revered and obeyed, as in them were centred the hopes of all men.<sup>1</sup>

During the time of Shahjahan, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti advocated that the Chishtiyyas were the sole protectors of the Emperor's life and were responsible for the survival of the kingdom. He affirmed that Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani and Saiyid Muhammad Ashraf Jahangir Simnani had advised Muslims to respect all types of rulers irrespective of their worth. Shaikh Sharafu'd-Din Yahya Munyari stated in his *Sharh-i Adabu'l-muridin* that Khwaja Muhammad bin Sirin was known to have said that if only one of his prayers was granted it would be for his ruler, as such a prayer led to the welfare of mankind. Referring to the mystical theory of the self-manifestation of the Absolute, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman concluded that kings were the manifestation of the known divine names and one of the divinely inspired foundations on which world survival depended; he also believed them to be the counterparts of the great divine figures (*rijal Allah*) who controlled the spiritual and material affairs of the world. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman also reminded Muslims of the Qur'anic injunction, 'O ye who believe! Obey Allah and obey the messenger and those of you who are in authority.'<sup>2</sup>

The following anecdote from the *Mir'atu'l-Asrar* of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti illustrates the Chishtiyya attitude towards kingship.

Once Mir Saiyid Ni'matu'llah Qadiri, the *Qutb* of Bengal, went to the Deccan and Gujarat. He returned to Akbarabad with Mir Saiyid Muhammad Gujarati. Mir Saiyid Ni'matu'llah, Mir Saiyid Muhammad and he (Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman) along with Shaikh 'Usman of Biyana remained for a year in Agra. One day Mir Saiyid Ni'matu'llah said that one evening Emperor Jahangir had invited Mir Saiyid Muhammad to his private chambers to tell him that he was greatly impressed with his (the Mir's) spiritual eminence. The Emperor said that he was a Muslim and his ancestors were also Muslims and worshippers of God. The divine names which he repeated morning and night were not a form of sun worship and he (Jahangir) repeated those divine names in order to make the sun submissive to him (*taskhir-i aqtab*). As the writings of sufis indicated, past rulers, sages and mystics were also known to have made the stars submissive to themselves (*taskhir-i kawakib*). (Jahangir) wished to assure him that he was an earnest seeker of God and could renounce the world. However, he was unable to abandon liquor to which he had been addicted from childhood; he was also unable to perform punctually the five daily prayers. Mir Saiyid Muhammad submitted that according to his *pirs*, and (the latter) the abstention from drinking were imperative (for salvation).

<sup>1</sup>*Akbarnama*, III, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, IV, 59; *Miratu'l-asrar*, ff. 10b-12a.



However the Emperor was His deputy to whom His kingdom had been entrusted. Under these circumstances the Emperor should protect this divinely bestowed kingdom and judiciously fulfil the needs of people. Always keeping the Omnipotent before him (the Emperor) should never forget he was constantly being observed. All these things should be a necessary part of a king's perception, said the Shaikh.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti considered the policy of *sulh-kul* (peace with all) to be a sterling ideal to which rulers should aspire. To him Shahjahan's policy of *sulh-kul* was a well-practised one whereas, by way of contrast, after the Shah of Iran had conquered Turan, he had killed several thousand Saiyids, sufis, '*ulama*' and others and became known as Rafizi (Shi'i). On the other hand when Shahjahan seized Qandahar from its governor, 'Ali Mardan Khan, no one was harmed and he went to the extent of awarding suitable *mansabs* and rewards to those who deserved them. The same policy was followed after his conquest of Balkh. To Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman this was a highly commendable action which sprang from a prudent regard for Islamic injunctions. Such a policy had far-reaching repercussions. The kindness and benevolence of the Emperor attracted to India people from many places, both Muslims and Hindus. Nevertheless the Emperor's deeply-rooted respect for Islam and its laws prompted these diverse religions and racial groups to become submissive to Islam. Fire-worshippers and Hindus had become so deeply submissive that in the streets and bazars cow killing had become rampant and no-one objected. Islamic authority so predominated that Hindus willingly offered their daughters in marriage to both the Emperor and members of the nobility. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman marvelled that the dominance of Islam did not offend a single individual from the Emperor downwards. This was the result, concluded the Shaikh, of the Emperor's liberality and obedience to the *Shari'a*.<sup>2</sup>

Although the remarks of the Shaikh about Hindus willingly marrying their daughters to muslims and cow sacrifices were gross exaggerations, they served to illustrate the Chishti and Shattari beliefs in the extensive dominance of Muslim rule. An even earlier exponent of such a view was Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi, the uncle of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, who summed up Sultan Sikandar's rule this way—'Muslims held the upper hand, the Hindus were docile'.<sup>3</sup>

To the Mujaddid's *khalifas*, however, Emperor Aurangzib epitomized all the virtues of kingship. During the first years of his reign, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum and Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id found their earliest recognition and thereafter were somewhat partisan in their judgments.

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, ff. 507b, 508a.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, f. 509a.

<sup>3</sup>*Waqf'at-i Mushtaqi*, f. 40a.



Expressing his gratification at the disappearance of the darkness of infidelity and sacrilegiousness, and at the uprooting of sinful innovations and *ilhad* (heresy) in the empire which were followed by a raising of the standards of justice and equity to the heavens, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum wrote that if by way of generosity and in the interest of the faith Aurangzib were to abolish whatever lewd practices remained, such as for example the use of intoxicating liquor and drugs, it would be an even greater achievement. He also added that in order of strengthen the foundations of the *Shari'a* it was essential that peremptory orders be issued to rebuild the dilapidated mosques, to re-open Islamic schools, improve the conditions under which the '*ulama*' and Islamic scholars laboured and to enhance the respect shown to sufi and Muslim ascetics.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum's son, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, to the great satisfaction of his father reported that the Emperor Aurangzib had acquired the state known to mystics as *sultan-i zikr*. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum also wrote that the mystical achievements of the Emperor had made him so ecstatic he felt like dancing for joy. After the report from his son the Shaikh began to believe that Aurangzib had been secretly blessed with a mystical grace (*latifa-i akhfa*) granted only to the Prophet Muhammad. In spite of this exclusiveness, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum also claimed a share of this blessing.<sup>2</sup>

While the Mujaddidiyya leaders in the early years of Aurangzib's reign were considered the counterparts of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar in India, other sufi *pirs*, pursuing a traditional policy of political aloofness, continued to support the Emperor and the Muslim community. However a number of them did not let any opportunity slip by which might enable them to ridicule the intimate relations between Aurangzib and the Naqshbandiyyas, as we can see by this anecdote of Shaikh Muhammad Arshad.

A member of the assembly of Shaikh Arshad claimed that *kotwals* (police chiefs and magistrates) were corrupt. Shaikh Muhammad Arshad replied to such a charge that the Emperor Aurangzib believed his Delhi *kotwal* to be the Junaid of his time, for he was a man famed for objective, adept handling of disputes. When the Emperor imprisoned Prince Mu'azzam Shah 'Alam (b. 1053/1643), Prince A'zam Shah (b. 1063/1653), the third surviving son, believed that if Shah 'Alam were killed, his own accession to the throne would not prove too difficult. He was also heartened by the fact that Prince Akbar (the fourth son of Aurangzib who had been born in 1067/1657) had already left for Iran and that the youngest, Muhammad Kam Bakhsh (b. 1077/1667) was too young for a

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat-i Sa'idiyya*, Lahore, 1385/1965, no. 37, p. 91.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat-i Ma'sumiyya*, III, no. 122, 221, 227.



serious attempt on the throne. He (A'zam Shah) started hatching plots, using a Shaikh from Sirhind to whom the Emperor was greatly attached for his own ends. As the Emperor himself was the *murid* of someone else, he had made Muhammad Kam Bakhsh the *murid* of Sirhindi Shaikh. Deciding to have Shah 'Alam killed, A'zam deposited with a banker 900,000 rupees in the name of the Sirhindi Shaikh, on the condition that the latter incite the Emperor to execute Shah 'Alam. The Shaikh informed the Emperor that Shah 'Alam was an evil man who should receive the death penalty and that such knowledge had been given to him by the Prophet. Owing to the seriousness of this accusation the Emperor requested the Shaikh to mystically consult the Prophet again, only to be told that the orders were final. The following morning the Shaikh called on the Emperor, urging him against a delay in carrying out the express command of the Prophet. Aurangzib summoned Sidi Faulad the *Kotwal*, to whom he delegated complete responsibility in the handling of the matter. Sidi Faulad summoned every prominent banker in the Imperial camp with their diaries and account books. The note about the plot hatched by A'zam Shah was found.<sup>1</sup> Even with such incriminating evidence the Emperor refused to execute a dervish, merely banishing him to Mecca. This incident was related by Shaikh Arshad some half a century later, in August 1734, and as such it should not be accepted too literally, although it does reflect the dependence of some weak-minded Mughal Emperors on the leading mystics of their reigns.

Before dealing with the response of sufis to the political conditions in India during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, passing reference should be made to the attitude of the Mughal emperors towards mystics in general. In the main a liberal policy of giving them revenue-free land grants (*madad-i ma'ash*) and stipends was followed. From the time of Shaikh Shihabu'd-Din Suhrawardi and Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya up until the fourteenth century the Suhrawardiyyas acted as ambassadors to foreign courts, as well as helping in the running of domestic affairs. Many Chishtis also served in government; for example, before the fateful battle of Chausa (9 Safar 946/26 June 1539) Humayun despatched Shaikh Khalil, a descendant of Shaikh Faridu'd-Din Ganj-i Shakar, to his opponent Sher Khan to sue for peace. The messenger, however, attracted by flattery turned traitor and betrayed his own cause.<sup>2</sup>

Akbar was skilful in his use of influential sufis in order to further his schemes of conquest and more to systematize his rule. Those who chose to live as ascetics were, however, offered stipends and non-taxable land grants. After assessing the extent of the support shown by some '*ulama*' and sufis for the extensive rebellions during 1580 and 1581, Akbar was

<sup>1</sup>*Ganj-i Faiyazi*, f. 184a.

<sup>2</sup>S.M. Imamuddin ed., *Tarikh-i Sher Shahi*, Decca, 1964, pp. 130-31.



prompted to take precautionary measures to ensure that the influence and power of both sufis and '*ulama*' would cease before they became a threat to the Mughal throne. His fears were not unjustified for in Iran, Shah Isma'il Safawi (907/1501-930/1524), a descendant of Shaikh Safi'u'd-Din (650/1252-53-735/1334), had transformed his Ardabil *khanqah* into a rallying centre for the rebellious Turcoman tribesmen and with their help founded the Safawid empire. Later Jahangir and Shahjahan also used strong measures against individual sufis and saints whom they considered potential opponents.

In the early part of his reign Jahangir banished Shaikh Nizam Thanewari to Mecca for having prayed for the success of the rebel Prince, Khusrau. After crushing the rebellions the imperial army was returning to Agra when Jahangir was informed of a large following gathered around Saiyid Ahmad Afghan, a strong supporter of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. At court the Saiyid's refusal to make obeisance according to required etiquette convinced Jahangir of his treacherous tendencies and he was imprisoned in the Gwalior fort. Later on 18 Jumada II 1019/7 Sept. 1610 the Shi'i Qazi Nuru'llah Shustari (b. 956/1549) was flogged to death for what a contemporary Irani biographer called 'concealing his Shi'i faith'.<sup>1</sup> Moreover Jahangir also had the Mujaddid imprisoned for political reasons and took serious disciplinary action against Khwaja Khawand Mahmud and Shaikh Nuru'l-Haqq. To the Emperor, despite their large followings, the above-mentioned sufis and '*ulama*' were 'hypocrites and impostors' (*shayyad*) while sufis and Hindu saints who spent their time in worship and prayer he dubbed *lashkar-i du'a*<sup>2</sup> (the army occupied with prayer). Even the puritanical considered that dervishes should devote the major part of their energies to prayer and worship.

Therefore the number of sufis and saints punished for political crimes during Jahangir's reign was not a meagre one. Shahjahan banished Shaikh Adam Banuri for political reasons. Even Aurangzib unhesitatingly took action against Sarmad, Mulla Shah and Shaikh Ni'matu'llah Qadiri, mainly because of their associations with his enemies.

Returning to the period of the eighteenth century, the disintegration of the Mughal empire and the associated decline in the political, social and economic life of Muslims in India was registered with the deepest concern by sufis in both prose and poetry. Among leading mystics Khwaja Mir Dard wrote that peace should nurture prosperity for the people and secure the country against the ravages of plunder, famine and other such calamities. The Sultan should be just to cultivators (*ra'aya*), as well as assisting religious dignitaries and dervishes and scholars. The main supports of any state—rulers, viziers, amirs, sufis and the '*ulama*' should

<sup>1</sup>MRM, pp. 318-21.

<sup>2</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 5.



exhibit qualities of moderation and dutifulness. Justice-loving kings and virtuous 'ulama' should devote all their energies towards the promotion of the faith and the protection of the *Shari'a*.<sup>1</sup> Mir Dard believed that the promotion of the *Shari'a* and the propagation of the 'Tariqa-i Muhammadiyya'<sup>2</sup> founded by him depended on the strength of the right-minded sultans and nobles, advising his followers to assist rulers and their officers through their company and prayers for their welfare, considering themselves members of the *lashkar-i du'a*.

The esoteric spiritual ideas of Shah Waliu'llah, were not, he believed, for the edification of his own soul but were revealed to him for the regeneration of the entire Sunni sect of Islam. His role as the *mujaddid* (renewer) of his century was not confined to reforming the religious and mystical life of the Sunnis. His world view for the implementation of *din*<sup>3</sup> was comprehensive and covered not only religious matters but also problems relating to the social, economic and political activities of the Sunnis. Shi'is being schismatic were, according to the Shah, excluded, Divine grace being reserved for Sunnis alone.

In the *Shari'a* actions associated with worship (*'ibada*) and relations between people (*mu'amala*) were not in conflict. Al-Ghazali (450/1058-505/1111) had previously divided sins according to those against God, men (meaning Sunnis) and oneself. In the *Hujjat Allah al-baligha* Shah Waliu'llah divided the various discussions and comments on the rationalization behind the *Shari'a* into two. Firstly, there were issues relating to virtues and vices; secondly, there were those concerning the governing of the Muslim community (*milla*).<sup>3</sup>

The Shah's political ideas were based on two important groups of sources. In the first were included the works on Sunnis *Fiqh* and *Hadis* and those of orthodox Sunni theorists such as al-Mawardi (b.c. 364/974, d. 450/1058), al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyya. Secondly there were the ideas outlined by leading Muslim philosophers such as Abu Narr al-Farabi (d. 339/950), Miskawai (d. 421/1030) and Ibn Sina (370/980-428/1073); all to be found in the *Akhlaq-i Nasiri* by Nasir al-Din Tusi (597/1201-672/1274) and the *Akhlaq-i Jalali*, written by Muhammad bin As'ad Jalal al-Din Dawani (830/1427-908/1502-03). Although the Shah had read both the Arabic and Persian translations of the *Kalila wa Dimna*, he

<sup>1</sup>Khawaja Mir Dard, *'Ilmu'l-kitab*, p. 551.

<sup>2</sup>L. Gardet defines *din* in three different ways: 1. judgement or retribution, 2. custom or usage and 3. religion. He also adds that whether one refers to the Hebrew or Aramaic sense of the ancient Arabic root, the word *din* signifies obligation, direction, submission and retribution. *Din*, distinct from *milla* (community), is opposed to *dunya* (this world) and *dawla* (government, political domain) but Islam not only maintains a link between *din* and *dawla* but includes both (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I, pp. 293-96).

<sup>3</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, Karachi, n.d., p. 20.



rejected its conclusions.<sup>1</sup> The Shah's own contribution in the realm of political thought lay in reconciling orthodox Sunni ideas with those of the philosophers, in suggesting the means by which to establish the domination of orthodox Sunnis in government and to spread among contemporary Sunnis the ideal piety of the *salaf* or earlier generations of Muslims. The latter was the part of the great mission which the Shah himself termed *tatbiq* (harmonization or reconciliation). He asserted that he had not invented the word but had obtained the ability to perform such a task through Divine grace.<sup>2</sup>

Prophets, Shah Wali-u'llah writes in his works, protect men from becoming corrupt by tradition and custom and lead others to a correct knowledge of God.<sup>3</sup> They receive guidance from Divine revelation and are empowered to perform miracles to aid them in their mission.<sup>4</sup> The basic distinctions amongst the many classes of people lead to different kinds of laws being prescribed for them. According to him in the days of Noah people were physically stronger, so they were ordered to fast continuously to enable them to crush their beastly natures. The *umma* (community) at the time of Muhammad was weaker, hence its members were forbidden to fast all the time. Pre-Islamic communities were not allowed to appropriate *ghanima* (war booty), but as Muhammad's *umma* was so physically feeble it was permissible for its members to use the goods obtained in *ghanima*.<sup>5</sup> Changes in reform techniques make it imperative that old laws be replaced with new ones, so that both balance and moderation are maintained in people's temperaments and dispositions. The natural, social, national and supernational laws discussed under *irtifaq*, (harmonization or the principles of devising useful schemes to promote social, political and cultural life) by Shah Waliu'llah,<sup>6</sup> were also controlled by the Prophets but after Muhammad, (the last of the prophets), the function of offering religious guidance to Muslims was to be continued by a *mujaddid* (renewer) whom God would send to Muslims at the end of each century. This would prevent them from unanimously pursuing an incorrect path.<sup>7</sup>

Shah Waliu'llah divides the Caliphate into two categories: the *Khilafat-i Khass* (special vicegerency) and the *Khilafat-i 'Amm* (common vicegerency). To all intents and purposes, argued the Shah, those elevated to the *Khilafat-i Khass* are sent to fulfil the functions of messenger Prophets

<sup>1</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>Shah Waliu'llah, *Tafhimat-i Ilahiya*, II, Bijnor, 1936, pp. 62-70, 217; *Budur al-bazigha*, Bijnor, 1936, p. 223.

<sup>3</sup>*Budur al-bazigha*, pp. 96, 99, 167, 181, 183, 197.

<sup>4</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilahiya*, II, pp. 134, 156.

<sup>5</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, p. 187.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 79-92.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 409.



(*Rasul*). Prophethood (*Nabuwa*) is neither acquired by physical nor spiritual exercises, nor is it innate in the messenger. The predominance of evil in the world moves the Divine will to dispatch a reformer of mankind. This task is entrusted to the most holy, high-minded and just of all. The intelligence of such an outstanding individual is obedient to the sphere of supreme angels (*al-mala al-a'la*); moreover he is one of the angels and mirrors their attributes. These qualities prompt him to receive Divine revelation. The Prophet guides people by teaching, arguing and admonishing; lastly he wages, *jihad* (war) against the recalcitrant and stubborn.

The *Khilafat-i Khass* of the Prophet is also neither innate nor acquired through effort. It is a type of desire which God puts into the heart of the *khalifa* (vicegerent) to fulfil the prophetic mission. Thousands of people may be inspired to strengthen the Prophet's *din*, but the person endowed with the *Khilafat-i Khass* occupies the place of heart in the body, the others being the limbs.

On the basis of the analogy of the prophecy (*risalat*) the Shah continues that Prophets commissioned to disseminate the divinely revealed law are granted both exoteric and esoteric abilities. The exoteric are devoted to the spreading of the divinely revealed law, but the esoteric faculty is the strong will of the Prophet. Likewise the external aspect of the *Khilafat-i Khass* devoted to the implementation of laws is revealed to the Prophet, but the inner aspect of a vicegerent's life is filled with the strong will (because of his associations with the Prophet) which is firmly rooted in the heart of the *Khalifa*. The real nature of the *Khilafat-i Khass* is identical to the nature of the Prophet; the discretionary power of the *Khilafat-i Khass* resembles that of the Prophet Muhammad who received Divine revelation. The practical powers of the *Khilafat-i Khass* are akin to immunity from sin and are known as *siddiqiyat* (being a faithful witness to the truth). His sanctity and power is so great that even the devil dares not approach him. The only difference between the *Khilafat-i Khass* and Prophets, is that the angelic soul of the former is awakened by the prophets not independently. A lengthy association with the Prophet, extreme types of self-sacrifice (including those of life and property) and intense love for the Prophet Muhammad, annihilates the egoism (*ananiyat*) of the *Khilafat-i Khass*. The latter considers participation in *jihad* not as an act of initiative but an expression of the truth. To him the sufferings of the Prophets are his own, the Prophet repeatedly forecasts his lofty place in paradise. Unless the Divine will intends to make a person a *Khalifa*, such noble qualities are not created in his own heart. In short, according to Shah Waliu'llah, the *Khilafat-i Khass*, like messenger Prophets is divinely appointed and universally obeyed.

The period of the *Khilafat-i Khass* according to Shah Waliu'llah, was confined to that of the Caliphate of the *Khulfa-i Rashidun*. A *Hadis* ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad fixes the duration of the Caliphate



as thirty years after his death, another makes it twenty-five. Shah Waliu'llah sees no contradiction in the above two traditions. He adds that in view of the fact that 'Ali (35/656-40/661) was among the earliest to embrace Islam (and was therefore superior to the average Muslim), his Caliphate may be included in the *Khilafat-i Khass*. This would make the length of the *Khilafat-i Khass* thirty years (11/632-40/661) but taking into consideration the view that 'Ali's Caliphate was torn by civil war, the *Khilafat-i Khass* would have ended with the death of Usman (23/644-35/656) and therefore lasted for twenty-five years. In a further chapter in the *Izalat al-khafa'* the Shah states that the continuous progress of Islam during the first three Caliphs indicates that the *Khilafat-i Rashida* survived only until the death of 'Usman. Discussing the Prophet's *Hadis* on the merits of different *qarans* (epochs), the Shah marshalled evidence to prove that the best age was that of the Prophet Muhammad, followed by that of Abu Bakr (11/632-13/634) and 'Umar (13/634-23/644). The third in merit was the age of 'Usman and the fourth, starting with his assassination, was the age of the *ikhtilaf* (differences). The true period of the *Khilafat-i Khass*, however, according to Shah Waliu'llah, was during the tenure of the Caliphate of Abu Bakr and 'Umar.

According to Shah Waliu'llah, verses from 78 chapters out of the 114 chapters of the Qur'an either openly or tacitly refer to the eminence of the first two Caliphs or their *Khilafat-i Khass*. Comparing the prophesies relating to the Prophet Muhammad in the Jewish Tora and the Christian gospels, and those about the first two Caliphs in the Qur'an, Shah Waliu'llah says that Muhammad is not named in the biblical verses but his appearance is implied in various prophesies; the same is true of the prophesies regarding the first two Caliphs in the Qur'an. He asserts that the following Qur'anic verse is a prophesy of the reign of the first two Caliphs. The verse says:

Allah hath promised such of you as believe and do good works that He will surely make them to succeed (the present rulers) in the earth even as He caused those who were before them to succeed (others); and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He hath approved for them, and will give them in exchange safety after their fear. They serve Me. They ascribe no thing as partner unto Me. Those who disbelieve henceforth, they are the miscreants.<sup>1</sup>

Shah Waliu'llah continues by saying that the Caliphs' forecast in the above verse were neither the Umayyads nor the 'Abbasids. The fulfilment of the promise at the beginning of the verse explicitly relates to events occurring after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. According to the Shah, the assassins of the third Caliph and the Imamiyya (Isna 'Ashari Shi'is) who believed that the Caliphate had been usurped from its right-

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXIV, p. 55, known as the *istikhlaf* verse.



ful successors, were most prominent among those guilty of ingratitude to God, who had appointed such wonderful successors to Muhammad. The Shi'is were quite misled to believe that the promise—'He will surely make them to succeed'—would be fulfilled at the appearance of the Mahdi. This had already occurred under the first two Caliphs, because of the dominance Islam had obtained over the world. The first two Caliphs had waged *jihad* against Qaisar (the Emperor of Byzantine) and Kisra (the Emperor of Iran) who collectively ruled the entire world, said the Shah, and had annihilated them both. The neighbouring rulers who paid tribute to Kisra and Qaisar had also been uprooted and Islam took over the conquered territories. In each town mosques were built and *qazis* (judges of the *shari'a*) were appointed. *Hadis* scholars and the *muftis* (those who gave *fatwa* or judicial sentence based on the *Shari'a*) of *Fiqh* (the science of Islamic religious law) settled in these regions. Recounting the greatness of Kisra and Qaisar the Shah states that the two divided up their respective area into religious zones. Rome, Russia, Frank, Germany, Ifriqiya, Syria, Egypt and Abyssinia, as well as towns in the West, followed Christianity and were supporters of Qaisar. In Khurasan, Turan, Turkistan, Zabulistan and Bactria were Zoroastrians who were ruled by Kisra. Other religions such as Judaism, Hinduism and various types of polytheism and paganism were under the control of either of the two Emperors and generally weak and in a state of disintegration. We are invited by the Shah to believe that the annihilation of these two Emperors was followed by the crushing defeat of all other religions and resulted in the ascendancy of Islam over the whole world (because of the pious efforts of the first two Caliphs).

No comment is necessary on Shah Waliu'llah's insight into seventh and eighth century world history. But what does emerge from his assertions is that to him successful military campaigns and the process of colonization represented an affirmation of the innate truth of Islam. The failure of the Shi'i *Imams* to become powerful politically to him implied that they did not enjoy Divine assistance. Moreover, as the Shi'is claimed they were always persecuted by other Muslims (the Sunnis) they were therefore excluded from the hopes and promises extended in the *istikhlaf* verse to the Muslim people at large. Shi'ism was therefore to the Shah a misguided sect.

The conquests made under the first three successors of Muhammad were to Shah Waliu'llah different from those of later Muslims. The earlier ones he believed were an extension and fulfilment of the prophetic mission of Muhammad and were also marked by certain other distinctive features. Firstly, the regions conquered after the period of the first three Caliphs (such as Turkistan, India, Frank and Abyssinia) were never fully Islamized and therefore Muslim practices were not satisfactorily introduced. Secondly, the first three Caliphs gained large tracts of territory within a



very short period, and although later conquests were not so extensive their Islamicization took many years. Thirdly, the conquests made by the first three successors of Muhammad were followed by the strict implementation of the rules of *Shari'a*, such as the distribution of *ghanima* (booty) and the enforcing of *kharaj* (land tax) and *jizya* (poll tax). Later Muslim conquerors failed to pay adequate attention to these factors. Fourthly, the territories of Qaisar and Kisra represented the conquest by Islam of the entire world which God had promised to Muhammad and had been achieved with his assistance. Shah Waliu'llah contradicts Shahrastani (d. 548/1153-54), the celebrated author of *al-Milal wa'n Nihal*, who believed that immediately after Muhammad's death *ikhtilaf* (differences) had emerged among the Muslims. There is no difference of opinion among any Islamic sect, argued the Shah, that 'Ali did not accept Abu Bakr as *Khalifa*.

Shah Waliu'llah underrated the many divisive elements contained in early Islam and asserted that *ikhtilaf* did not include differences of opinion expressed in a discussion which was concluded with consensus. *Ikhtilaf* was rather the dissemination of two different ideologies, the protagonists of each trying to seek the support of a majority and a disapproval of the arguments of his opponents.

In the same vein the Shah continued that *ijma'* (the agreement of the mujtahids) did not imply that *mujtahids* (lawyers qualified to pronounce judgments on the methods of reasoning by analogy) unanimously accepted a particular point of view and believed that no one should differ. According to him *ijma'* could be defined as those orders of the *Khalifat-i Khass* which he issued after consulting people qualified to pronounce on such topics; or issued by the *Khilafat-i Khass* without consultation, which became acceptable and were followed by the entire Islamic world. To the Shah, the Prophet Muhammad had imposed on Muslims a duty to follow his *Sunna* (example or precepts) and that of the *Khulafa'-i Rashidun*. The *ijma'*, he added, did not suggest that a decision was reached in accordance with the requirements of the time, but that each companion of the Prophet Muhammad had convinced himself about the vicegerency of the *Khulafa'-i Rashidun* (either from the *Sunna* of the Prophet or from his statements dealing with the problem of succession). The Shah believed such a decision was perhaps the best example of *ijma'*.

Naturally Shah Waliu'llah supported his arguments with Sunni *ahadis*, as well as various statements made by Shi'i authorities which he believed proved the rightful succession of the first four Caliphs. He did not ignore the most famous Shi'i *hadith* that, on his way from Mecca to Medina after his last pilgrimage on 18 Zu'l-hijja 10/16 March 632, the Prophet Muhammad had stopped near a pool named Ghadir Khumm, and had delivered a sermon in which he said: '*man kuntu mawlahu fa 'Ali mawlahu* (He to whom I am the *mawla* [the patron] of him 'Ali is also the *mawla*.'



According to the Shi'is this sentence represented Prophet Muhammad's nomination of 'Ali as his successor. However, Shah Waliu'llah interpreted the word '*mawla*' as 'friend', and added that it had no relevance to the nomination of the *khalifa*. The statement, he believed, was a suggestion to Muslims to be friendly to 'Ali and his family. Similar advice, said the Shah, had been given on the friendship of Muhammad's uncle, 'Abbas, (d. 32/653), his descendants and wives.<sup>1</sup>

According to Shah Waliu'llah, the Umayyad and 'Abbasid Caliphs belonged to the category of the *Khulafa-i 'Amm* (ordinary vicegerent). They were required to possess extensive resources and military power, to be able to counter any attempted territorial attack. It was imperative on the part of ordinary Caliphs to exterminate rebellious kings, without depending on assistance from their subordinates. The appointment of just and pious Caliphs, continued the Shah, helped to quell rebellious elements and prompted other kings to obey him.<sup>2</sup> To him the terms for ordinary Caliphs, kings and *Imams* were interchangeable.

Perhaps the most important duty of an *Imam*, asserted Shah Waliu'llah, was to make his religion dominant over others. In this mission he should not be expected to spare an opponent's honour or shield him from humiliation. The performance of the *Imam's* duties, according to the Shah, would divide his subjects into three categories:

1. Those who would be both outwardly and inwardly obedient to his religion;
2. Those outwardly obedient to the *Imam* and powerless to rebel.
3. Despicable infidels whom the *Imam* would treat like animals. These should be spared only to work as agricultural labourers and beasts of burden, and would be required to pay *jizya* (poll tax) in a state of utter humiliation.

When one faith dominates, the Shah continued, certain outward signs are visible. One example is that members of the leading religion should be able to observe their rules of faith most assertively, such as circumcision, respect for mosques, calling *azan* (the signal which summons the faithful to prayers) and the organization of congregational prayers. It is also imperative that the *Imam* should forbid members of other faiths from publicly performing their own rites. Moreover infidels should not be treated on an equal footing with Muslims in such matters as the *qisas* (law of retaliation), *diyat* (compensation for manslaughter), marriage and participation in the workings of the government. Such disabilities might prompt infidels to embrace Islam.<sup>3</sup>

The Shah believed it improper for the Caliph to perform his duties for worldly motives; nor should he use his followers in a destructive way so as

<sup>1</sup>Shah Waliu'llah, *Izalat al-khafa*, I, Karachi, n.d., pp. 37-194.

<sup>2</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, p. 96.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, pp. 256-57.



to enrich himself. The chief duty of the *khalifa* was to please the majority of his supporters and try to benefit each one. He should honour those who were endowed with qualities of leadership and wisdom and he should use both persuasion and fear of reprisals to prepare them to fight.

A Caliph's first concern with his non-Sunni subjects was to see them disunited, weak and in awe of his position. This would lessen the threat of rebellion. If he believed they represented a threat he should inflict heavy *kharaj* (land revenue) and *jizya* and dismantle their forts. The use of spies was a necessary means to maintain the *status quo*. If a group was discovered working against the state, a rival group should be organized to thwart its efforts. A Caliph's subjects should be forced to show loyalty and submissiveness at all times. Even their actions in large crowds should be watched to ensure that each person really prayed for the Caliph and obeyed his every order.<sup>1</sup>

While discussing the peace and prosperity of towns, Shah Waliu'llah listed a number of virtues which a king should possess. He should be brave in the face of opposition from his rivals and forcefully assert his prestige among his subjects. However, a king, if not affable (*halim*) and wise would be unable to carry out his policies and would ruin his kingdom by reckless administration.

Of a king's attributes it was essential he possessed such virtues as maturity, independence and prudence. Moreover, he should have a highly developed sense of sight, hearing and speech. His noble lineage and those of his ancestors should be well-known and of such distinction as to arouse universal respect. Everyone believed, argued the Shah, that unless the king was endowed with such virtues the rationale behind his appointment was meaningless; however, even if he possessed them and failed to nurture them his subjects would still become alienated. Every action of a king should be directed towards enhancing his dignity.

The Shah likened the king to a hunter who pursued his people by varying means according to their temperaments. For example, if he were hunting deer he would remain hidden and silent until they could be caught unawares or he could sing to them and feed them until they became fearless, then strike. Kindness increased love for the benefactor; a chain of love was stronger than a sword. One who held kingly office should be appealing in action, dress and speech. His obvious sincerity and warmth towards other should inspire their confidence. As well as showering favours and kindnesses on people (with the intent of making them submissive) the king should not hesitate to punish those who rebelled. He should promote loyal servants to fulfil certain roles—to fight in battle, collect revenue and generally act unselfishly for the benefit of the government. Traitors and embezzlers of the state coffers should be

<sup>1</sup>*Hujjat Allah at-baligha*, I, pp. 97-98.



demoted. If a king suspected anyone of disloyalty he should never be promoted as it was far too difficult to dismiss him later. People who were given a position because they had powerful relations should never be assigned to tasks of importance.

'*Ushr* (tithe) and *kharaj* should be judiciously gathered without the population being unnecessarily harassed. A king should not compel people to cultivate unproductive land or force them to migrate far from their original homes. Additional taxes should be realized from affluent sections of society, such as those with considerable assets of gold and silver or livestock, or who were involved in prosperous forms of trade. Should these sections fail to fulfil the financial needs of the government, then additional taxes had to be levied on artisans.

In relation to the treatment of the military, said the Shah, a king should follow the pattern of excellent horsemen. On occasions horses should be whipped and yelled at and at all times should be kept under tight control. Army commanders and town administrators should be recruited according to the needs of each town. A town's administration should feature five classes of officers:

1. A *qazi* who should never have been a slave, was a male, both adult and sagacious. Strictness and kindness should be harmoniously combined in a *qazi*'s personality. In a dispute he should be masterly in deciphering the real truth and unveiling and frauds perpetrated by the different factions. Firstly a *qazi* should examine every aspect of the dispute and arrive at independent conclusion; secondly, the real intentions of the rival parties should be unearthed and the arguments of each party carefully examined.

2. An *amir* (army commander) should have a thorough knowledge of current war equipment and accept only the bellicose and courageous into his army, adequately reimbursing them. Among his accomplishments he should understand logistics, the most advantageous use of espionage and all possible stratagems used by an enemy.

3. The *ra'is* (governor) of the town should also exhibit the quality of courage and be aware of factors which both debilitate and improve the standard of living in a town. He, too, should be kind, yet stern and ruthless when dealing with crime. A leader from each section of the population should be chosen by him, with extensive knowledge of his own group, which he himself can in turn administer. Crime of the group should be the responsibility of each leader.

4. An *amil* (revenue collector) should be an expert in the sources of revenue collection and should be adept at the distribution of revenue among the needy sections of society.

5. A *wakil* (minister, should be aware of the correct control of the finances, while enabling the king to devote his time to more pressing



government matters.<sup>1</sup>

It is not surprising that Shah Waliu'llah considered Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (388/998-421/1030) Islam's greatest ruler as he launched and sustained the first real conquest of northern India. His fame had a natural qualification—Mahmud was the greatest ruler after the *Khilafat-i Khass*. Shah Waliu'llah argued that in reference to Mahmud historians failed to recognize that his horoscope had been identical to the Prophet's and that this fact had enabled him to obtain significant victories in wars to propagate Islam.<sup>2</sup> However, he did not support Turkish expansion without qualification and quoted a tradition of Muhammad which implied that as long as the Turks remained aloof from the Arabs, they should do likewise.<sup>3</sup>

Although we have no documentary evidence to support the belief that Shah Waliu'llah's concern with the political disintegration of the Mughal empire began before he left the country for a pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, we may not be wrong in assuming that his sensitive soul had for many years been deeply touched by the decline of Mughal rule in India. On his return in 1145/1732 the Shah began to show for the first time his deeply-rooted conviction of the need for a return to Muslim power. This idea was to become an obsessive and integral part of his beliefs and for which he was later to become famous.

Not only Nizamu'l-Mulk Asaf Jah,<sup>4</sup> Ahmad Shah Durrani<sup>5</sup> and the Ruhilla chief, Najibu'd-Dawla<sup>6</sup> in turn were the great hopes of Shah

<sup>1</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, pp. 92-96.

<sup>2</sup>Shah Waliu'llah, *Qurrat al-a'ynain fi tafzil al-shaykhayn*, Delhi, 1893, p. 324.

<sup>3</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, p. 256.

<sup>4</sup>Nizam al-Mulk Asaf Jah, whose original name was Chin Qulich Khan, was a leading Turani noble during the second half of Aurangzib's reign. Far-sighted and resourceful, Asaf Jah was an orthodox Sunni. In the eighteenth century political world of the Mughal court he played an important role and became the pivot around which were centred the hopes of orthodox Sunnis. His disillusionment with the Mughal court prompted him to concentrate his efforts in the Deccan, where in 1724 he finally found the independent Asaf Jahi dynasty of Hyderabad. He succeeded in stemming the tide of Maratha aggression in his state and successfully reorganized its administration.

<sup>5</sup>An enterprising soldier of the Popalzay clan of the Abdali tribe of Afghans, Ahmad Shah joined the army of Nadir Shah of Iran. In 1160/1747, Ahmad Shah made his way back to his tribal areas with local tribesmen. En route to Qandahar he declared himself an independent Afghan king, adopting the title, *Durr-i Durran* (Pearl of Pearls). Following the lead set by Nadir Shah, in 1757 Ahmad Shah sacked Delhi and Mathura and again on 14 January 1761 delivered a crushing defeat to the Marathas at Panipat. He annexed Kashmir, the Panjab, Sind and Kabul to his newly-founded Afghan empire, but failed in his attempts to reorganize the administration of the Indian provinces. Ahmad Shah Durrani died in 1184/1773. During the last years of his reign the Sikhs became a formidable power in the Panjab and extended their raids as far as Delhi.

<sup>6</sup>Najibu'd-Dawla was born in c. 1707, near Peshawar, into an obscure Afghan family, in 1743 he migrated to Anwala, east of Delhi. The constant migration of the



Waliu'llah, but he also tried to awaken in the imbecile, licentious Mughal Emperor Ahmad Shah (1161/1748-1167/1754) the need to revitalize the disintegrating Mughal empire. In a letter to the Emperor, Shah Waliu'llah suggested a number of traditional schemes to streamline the Mughal administration, adding:

Strict orders should be issued in all Islamic towns forbidding religious ceremonies publicly practised by infidels (such as the performance of Holi and ritual bathing in the Ganges). On the tenth of Muharram Shi'is should not be allowed to go beyond the bounds of moderation, neither should they be rude nor repeat stupid things (that is, recite *tabarra* or condemn the first three successors of Muhammad) in the streets or bazaars.<sup>1</sup>

Shah Waliu'llah seems to be oblivious of the remarks of Sultan Jalalu'd-Din Khalji (689/1290-694/1296) that he himself had been incapable of preventing Hindus from openly passing his palace *en route* to their ritual bathing and idol worship.<sup>2</sup> In fact it was even more impractical for eighteenth century Indian rulers, even if they had possessed such vast power as had Aurangzib, to overtly interfere with Hindu religious practices and traditional customs. Ahmad Shah was quite unable to implement any of Shah Waliu'llah's extreme suggestion; however his successor, Alamgir II (1167/1754-1173/1760) did recklessly usher in his reign by prohibiting certain Shi'i ceremonies attached to Muharram.<sup>3</sup> Maratha dominance had made any religious restriction on Hindus out of the question.

The simile of a human body with its associated limbs was used by the Shah to describe a city. The welfare of a town (that is, one dominated by Sunnis) depended on each economic and professional group performing. Ruhilla Afghans had turned the region into a homeland they called Ruhilkhand. Najibu'd-Dawla lost little time in rising to power. In 1753 he fought Safdarjang (the Shi'i prime minister of Emperor Ahmad Shah) and became recognized as a great Sunni leader in Delhi. The senior Ruhilla chiefs were naturally unhappy with Najibu'd-Dawla's meteoric rise, so for protection he decided to make himself a protégé of Ahmad Shah Durrani. Shah Waliu'llah encouraged Najib al-Dawla to fight the Marathas and Jats and joined him in corresponding with Durrani, urging the latter to invade Delhi for a second time. After Durrani's departure from Delhi in 1761, until his own death in 1184/1770, Najibu'd-Dawla remained dictator of Delhi, while the Emperor, Shah 'Alam II led the quiet life of a pensioner of the Shi'is of Awadh and the British, rather than seek the protection of the Sunni Najibu'd-Dawla in Delhi. It was early in 1771 that Shah 'Alam, finding Delhi free of the Sunni dominance of Najibu'd-Dawla, returned to the capital escorted by Marathas, and on New Year's Day 1772, ascended the throne of his ancestors in Delhi.

<sup>1</sup>K.A. Nizami has published this letter in his work. *Shah Waliu'llah Dihlawi Ke Siyasi Maktabat*, Aligarh, 1950, pp. 41-44, 2nd edition, Delhi 1969, p. 5. As mentioned earlier he has omitted Paragraph 8 containing Shah Waliu'llah's advice referring to Hindus and Shi'is.

<sup>2</sup>*Tarikh-i Firuz Shahi*, Calcutta, 1860-62, pp. 216-17.

<sup>3</sup>*Tarikh-i 'Alamgir Sani*, British Museum MS., Or. 1749, ff. 25b-26a.



its prescribed task. If people from one town moved to another or returned to the desert, these migrations had disastrous effects on the urban centres. Agriculturists could be termed the town's food, said the Shah, while artisans, merchants and soldiers were the salt which when added improved its taste.<sup>1</sup>

Excessive taxation even imposed on agriculturists, the Shah believed, led to a decline of urban areas. He launched a strong attack on the noble rich of his time. They, too, forced up the rate of taxation because of their indulgence in luxurious living. Frivolously they devoted their energies to teaching music and dancing to pretty women and in buying extravagant articles like jewellery. Naturally these pursuits left no time for useful professions. This in turn led to a higher taxation on agriculture. A fear of God, said the Shah, would lead these people to relinquish their evil ways. They should give up the overt consumption of alcohol and the construction of huge mansions which were used as brothels and places for gambling. Moreover, he reproached them that as a class they were unaware that for the past 600 years punishments sanctioned by the *Shari'a* had not been justly carried out in their urban centres and in lieu the weak were punished while the strong remained free.

Addressing Muslim soldiers the Shah argued that they had been raised by Allah for the purposes of *jihad* in order to root out polytheism at its core. They were failing, however, to pursue their sacred duty. Their horses and arms were used to enrich themselves and *jihad* remained far from their minds. They drank, consumed Indian hemp, were clean shaven (except for moustaches) and oppressed the weak. In return for such bad behaviour they gave nothing to society. Fervently the Shah reminded the military that they would soon have to account for their deeds before their Creator. God wished them to act and dress like pious *ghazis*. They should wear beards (without moustaches), perform compulsory prayers and protect the poor and defenceless. *Ghazis* in battle should be eager for victory. Prior to travelling and fighting they should pray. If all these customs were followed the Shah believed it would be impossible for Muslim soldiers to loose in battle.

Turning to the artisans the Shah asserted that they, like members of other classes in Muslim society, had adopted wicked ways. They had abandoned compulsory prayers and had begun to worship their own gods, making pilgrimages to the tombs of sufis, like Shah Madar and Saiyid Salar. They had invented innumerable devices for divining and followed a multitude of superstitious and magical practices. Some of them had adopted a special type of dress and superstitiously ate certain food. Some drank alcohol and forced their women into prostitution to support their evil habits. These evils ensured they would experience unhappy

<sup>1</sup>*Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, pp. 79-92; II, 480.



lives in this world and none-too-pleasant in the next. Instead they should exist on small sums to enable them to lead a happy life in this world as well as after death. The mornings and evenings of artisans should be occupied in prayer; their days in the pursuit of their legitimate and traditional professions; their nights set apart for their families. Their earnings should be greater than their spending and the remainder should be used for the comfort of travellers, the helpless and for any emergency.

To the descendants of leading sufis, Shah Waliu'llah posed the question why they had splintered into various groups, each directed along a different path. He believed these sufis had abandoned God's way and that of the Prophet Muhammad, and that they had assumed instead their own leadership, thereby challenging God's. Not only misguided in their own religious practices, sufis posed as teachers and influenced others. Moreover the Shah asserted they accepted disciples for money to which he said he was strongly opposed. Once having acquired a certain type of superior knowledge which he described as 'noble,' its secrets should not be squandered for worldly gains. The Shah believed that in a sufi-disciple relationship the disciple was led away from Allah and the Prophet. To him some sufis were bandits, thugs, impostors and antichrists. Shah Waliu'llah continued with a general note of warning to all Muslims about teachers—they should beware of those who failed to attract people to the Qur'an and the Prophet Muhammad's *Sunna*, but drew them to themselves. The subtle teachings of past sufis could not be discussed publicly for sufism in general was designed to promote *ihsan* (noble conduct).

Addressing the '*ulama*', the Shah called them fools, preoccupied with Greek learning and the mastery of grammar. To him these did not rate as forms of learning. Real knowledge was confined to Qur'anic verses and the understanding of the *Sunna*. Therefore the '*ulama*' should learn the Qur'an and understand its complex terminology and controversial verses. Likewise it was the duty of all theologians to preserve the authentic *ahadis* of the Prophet. They should attain a correct understanding of the Prophet Muhammad's methods used in prayers, ablutions, *hajj* and *jihad*. Even his way of speaking and the control of his voice should be copied and they should also have some knowledge of his ethical beliefs. The *Sunna*, however, should not be elevated to the status of obligatory Qur'anic duties, like methods of performing ablutions and *slat*, the *nisab* (a certain estate or number of cattle for which either legal alms or a tax was paid), of *zakat* and the rules of inheritance. The history of the Prophet Muhammad's companions and Arabic grammar should be studied with theology in mind.

Challenging the way of life of preachers and ascetics who led retired lives in *khanqahs* (sufi hospices), Shah Waliu'llah asserted that the rules they imposed upon themselves were not religious. Preachers had been



confusing people by quoting apocryphal *ahadis* in their sermons. Ecstatic utterances, said the Shah, came from those who were not engrossed in the Divine; rather people should learn *ihsan* in order to receive Divine inspiration. After His creation of the Prophet Muhammad's community, Allah had been prepared to assist, rather than hinder, people in their religious duties.

The Shah's admonitions to common Muslims were equally severe. Being demoralized, he said, they had turned to cupidity and avarice. Women had begun to dominate men and they in turn had ignored the natural rights of women. People considered the unlawful palatable and the lawful bitter. Allah had commanded nothing that could not be performed by the average person. The Shah advised Muslims to satisfy their sexual urges in lawful marriages (even if men felt they had to have more than one wife).

Extravagance should be avoided by people in every social group. Only food that was permitted by the *Shari'a* should be eaten. People should support themselves without becoming parasitic on the community or state. God would help each person to achieve self-sufficiency.<sup>1</sup>

In summary, the crucial factors in an ideal existence, believed the Shah, were *'adl* (equity and justice) and *tawazun* (moderation) as applied in the social, political and economic spheres. The disintegration of the political influence of Indian Muslims did not even faintly discourage the Shah's belief in their inevitable reassertion of that faded power. He had a firm conviction that were Hindu strength to re-emerge in India. The Divine mystery would guide its leaders into the bosom of Islam.<sup>2</sup> Shah Waliu'llah accepted the temptation to make such an assertion because of the earlier conversions of Berke (reigned 1257-1266), grandson of Chingiz Khan (1206-1277), and of the Ilkhanid Mahmud Ghazan (reigned 1295-1304). Like other orthodox Muslims the Shah considered the Mongol conversions a great triumph for Islam, without concerning himself with the political factors behind them. Clearly the Shah was neither separatist nor exclusivist, as many modern Muslims claim; his political mission was to see the restoration of Sunni dominance over the world, the starting point being India.

Shah Waliu'llah's call to return to the Arabic language, Arabic dress and Arab styles of living<sup>3</sup> was a reaction against Irani and Hindu influences on the Mughal government. The downfall of Iranis and Hindus, the Shah believed, was destined to restore the charisma of the Sunni *firqa najiya* (sect to attain salvation).

After the British conquest of Delhi, in response to a legal question

<sup>1</sup>*Tafhimat-i Ilahiyya*, I, *tafhim* 69, pp. 205, 209, 211, 214-219.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, p. 203; *Malfuzat-i Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz*, p. 40.

<sup>3</sup>Shah Waliu'llah, *Wasiyat-nama*, Lucknow, 1290/1873, p. 7.



Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz declared that according to previously collected *fatwas*, *Daru'l-Islam* (the land of Islam) in India was legally replaced by a state of *Daru'l-Harb* (the land of War). In Delhi for example the *Imam al-Muslimin* (the blind Mughal Emperor) was quite powerless and the new Christian masters had so firmly replaced Sunni rule with their own that many administrative aspects of the previous Muslim regime had been swept away. These included the payment of *kharaj*, *baj* (tribute), '*ushr*', commercial taxes, the punishment of thieves, the settlement of disputes, and the punishment of crimes in accordance with the Islamic *Shari'a*. In many other ways also the orders of infidel rulers were obeyed. Although the Christians did not interfere with the performance of Friday and 'Id prayers, the *azan* (call to prayer) and cow slaughter, these to Christian administrators were mere trifles when compared with the destruction of mosques. The freedom of the local population, both Muslim and *zimmi*s (protected subject i.e. non-Muslims) was so capriciously restricted that they were even forbidden to leave the capital for other towns without permission. The new rule applied to everyone, even to such distinguished people as Shuja'u'l-Mulk and Wilayati Begum who were forced to apply for permission before visiting Delhi. By this time Christian rule and influence had spread all through India, although some states, like Hyderabad, Lucknow and Rampur, had managed to escape direct Christian rule either because it suited British interests or because their local rulers had been too feeble to resist the Christian rule.<sup>1</sup>

The *fatwa* of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz to which we referred was not the manifesto for a war of independence as suggested by a number of modern Muslim scholars. It was merely an answer to some legal questions and had no relevance to the struggle against the British. Moreover the Emperor Shah 'Alam whom Ghulam Qadir Ruhilla had blinded towards the end of July 1788, was not qualified to act as a Muslim Imam.<sup>2</sup> According to another *fatwa* the transformation of an Indian *Daru'l-Islam* into a *Daru'l-Harb* was a controversial and complex matter, even though Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz claimed that British rule had heralded it in.

The main difficulties of Muslims living in a *Daru'l-Harb* were solved in a *fatwa* issued by the Shah. After the Marathas had seized Delhi, Shah Nizamud-Din had been appointed the representative of Mahadji Sindhia who liberated Shah 'Alam and killed the usurper, Ghulam Qadir, in February 1789. Shah Nizam had smoothed the way for an acceptance of the new regime by theologians and sufis. His appointment concurred with the ideas of Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz who believed that if an infidel ruler

<sup>1</sup>*Fatawa-i 'Aziz*, I, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>According to al-Mawardi sound, eye-sight, hearing and speech, and healthy limbs are essential conditions for the office of Imam: 'Ali ibn Muhammad al-Mawardi, *Al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyya*, Cairo, 1881, p. 7. Many caliphs and sultans were blinded in order to disqualify them from holding the office of a ruler.



refused to appoint a Muslim governor, Muslims themselves should elect a leader to perform and direct Friday and 'Id prayers, various ceremonies and so on.<sup>1</sup> The appointee could also be authorized to distribute the property of the deceased. Moreover, Muslims should take great care only to lend and borrow money on interest from infidels when absolutely necessary for their survival. As for any form of service to infidels, this was unlawful while the latter were engaged in warfare against the faithful or they violated the laws of the *Shari'a*. In other circumstances there was no harm in Muslims serving the infidels or the British. The Shah supported this while asserting that the Prophet Muhammad's caliphs and companions had served as tutors to the children of Jews and argued that he himself could not be condemned for allowing his relations to serve the British.<sup>2</sup>

The annihilation of the Sikhs throughout northern India was the overwhelming political and religious motivating force of the fiery Saiyid Ahmad Shahid. He believed that a programme for the liquidation of the British should be undertaken only after the complete annihilation of the Sikh rule under Raja Ranjit Singh. As *jihad* could be fought only with the leadership of an Imam, Saiyid Ahmad felt divinely drawn to assume such a position. On 12 Jumada II 1242/11 January 1827 he officiated at a ceremony of *bay'a* in which several thousand theologians, sufis, leading citizens and common people in the North West Frontier pledged him their allegiance, after which they recited the *khutba* in his name.<sup>3</sup> At the time Saiyid protested that as an *Imam* he was not commissioned to deprive the various sultans between Kabul and Bukhara of their states. They could continue to flourish in peace, he said, and he would assert only his leadership in the question of *bid'a* (sinful innovations). However they were urged to offer him their military assistance in a *jihad* against the Sikhs.<sup>4</sup>

In a long letter to the rulers of Bukhara, Saiyid Ahmad asserted that he had personally been divinely delegated the task of liberating Muslim towns from the hands of infidels, that he had succeeded in slaughtering these villains and had restored the performance of Friday and 'Id prayers.<sup>5</sup> Shah Isma'il, the Saiyid's literary secretary, wrote a book on the *Imamat* as well as letters on behalf of the Saiyid to the '*ulama*', sufis and other leading personalities. In these Shah Isma'il stated that *bay'a* to an *Imam* could be compared to service rendered by servants to their sultans or to the loyalty offered by Afghans to their tribal brothers.

<sup>1</sup>*Fatawa-i 'Aziz*, I, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, pp. 91, 114-16.

<sup>3</sup>Muhammad Ja'far Thanewari, ed., *Maktubat-Saiyid Ahmad Shahid*, Karachi, 1969, no. 19.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. no. 14.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, no. 31.



*Bay'a*, however, was more powerful than both of these. All Muslims should be obedient to the present Imam, Saiyid Ahmad, stated Shah Isma'il; those who rejected him as *Imam* or later relinquished their allegiance should be annihilated as if they were *kafirs*.



## Chapter Eight

### The Sufi Response to Hinduism

THE interaction between medieval Hindu mystical traditions and sufism already discussed in the first volume, deepened during the sixteenth century. It was mainly stimulated by the availability of Persian translations of Sanskrit classics, most notably the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the *Yoga-Vasishtha*. Although the appreciation and reaction of individual sufis naturally varied enormously the study of Persian translations of the Sanskrit classics continued unabated until the nineteenth century.

The Sanskrit philosophical work the *Yoga-Vasishtha* began with the following prayer:

Salutations be to the ultimate Reality, Para Brahma, from whom has sprung all that is, in whom all things have their being and to whom everything returns in the end to be one with him. Salutations be to Brahma whose essence is knowledge eternal, the substratum that lies under the knowable, the process of knowing and the knower, the visible, the vision and the seer, doing, the final cause and the doer. Salutations be to the oversoul who is all bliss, a mere spark of whose joy constitutes the life of all that lives, a drop of the ocean of whose joy is all the sense enjoyments of the gods and men and all sentient things!<sup>1</sup>

The Persian translations of this work identify *Para Brahma* (not to be confused with the later Hindu triad, Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Shiva the Destroyer) with the Absolute, and explain the God-world relationship in terms of the self-manifestation of the Absolute contained in the mystical philosophy of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

Although the popularity of the Nath-yogic philosophy in relation to the Muslim sufi mind, and of the verses of Kabir, greatly increased among a number of *muwahhids* (believers in the Unity of Being) and among all sections of Indian sufis, including uncompromising devotees of the

<sup>1</sup>Bose, D.N. tr., *The Yoga-Vasishtha Ramayana*, I, Calcutta, n.d., p. 1.



*Wahdat al-Shuhud*,<sup>1</sup> an even more remarkable feature was the growing interest in the *Vedanta*. To the Emperor Jahangir and many others the following verse of the sufi poet, Baba Fighani (d. 925/1519) of Shiraz, epitomized the teachings of both the *Vedanta* and sufism. The Baba wrote:

There is one lamp in this house, by whose rays,  
Wherever I look there is an assembly.<sup>2</sup>

The God-world relationship in the translation of the *Yoga-Vasishtha* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* was also neatly reconciled with the ontological stages of the self-manifestation of the Absolute. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti, the sufi interpreter of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, believed the crucial point of Krishna's teachings were summed up in the words:

'O Arjuna! Whatever you do consider Him as its author, associate none with Him and be assured that All is He, that is One and no partner'. The *Bhagavad-Gita* says,

*sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā labh'alabhau jay'ajayau,  
tato yuddhaya yuhyasva: n'aivam papam avapsyasi.*

Hold pleasure and pain, profit and loss, victory and defeat to be the same: then brace yourself for the fight. So will you bring no evil on yourself.

*esa te 'bhihita samkhye buddhir; yoge tv imam śṛṇu  
buddhya yukto yaya, Partha, karma-bandham prahasyasi.*

This wisdom has [now] been revealed to you in theory; listen now to how it should be practised. If you are controlled by the soul, you will put away the bondage that is inherent in [all] works.<sup>3</sup>

*yad ahamkaram asritya na yotsya iti manyase,  
mithy' aiṣa vyavasayas te, prakṛtis tvam niyokṣyati.*

[But if,] relying on your ego, you should think, 'I will not fight', vain is your resolve, [for] Nature will constrain you.

*svabhava-jena, Kaunteya, nibaddhaḥ svena karmaṇa  
kartum n'ecchasi yan mohat, kariṣyasi avaso 'pi tat.*

You are bound by your own works which spring from your own nature; [for] what, deluded, you would not do you will do perforce.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman interpreted Krishna as saying: 'O Arjuna! As a boat is moved by the wind, the senses are moved by your ego.

For example, before his death the Mujaddid used to recite the following Hindi verse:

*Aj milawa Kant son: sakhi Sabh jag dinon war*

(O Sakhi (girl-friend) this is the day of union with the Beloved.

I give away the whole universe (in happiness), *Zubdatul-maqamat*, p. 287.

<sup>2</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 177.

<sup>3</sup>Zaehner, R.C., *The Bhagavad-Gita*, Oxford, 1969, pp. 138-39, chapter 11, 38-39.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 399, chapter XVIII, 59-60.



Control ego in whatever way you can, for the universe according to the *muwahhids* (believers in the Unity of Being) is a dream.' However only the *muwahhids* are awake in the 'colourless' world,<sup>1</sup> the rest have no knowledge of this universe.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to Arjuna's objections to waging war against his brothers and kinsfolk, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman emphasized that Krishna was implying that Arjuna should be steadfast on the path of duty and in realization of the Unity of Being. Krishna described to Arjuna the *muwahhid* as someone who considered humans, animals and all creatures equally important, while the devotee or gnostic (*'arif*) as someone who considered God as the principal agent of his own actions.<sup>3</sup>

The similarities between the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and the philosophy of yogis and Brahmans (Vedantists) were so remarkable that even the Mujaddid was prompted to argue that because such a concept was taught by Greek philosophers as well as yogis and Brahmans, it would have no meaning for him.<sup>4</sup> He refused to allow of any association between Rama or Krishna and Rahman (the Merciful), arguing that although Hindu gods acknowledged a Supreme Creator, they had invited people to worship themselves, asserting that the Supreme Being was infused into and united with them (*hulul*). He stated that considering Rama as Rahman was a stupid blunder and amounted to calling the Emperor a sweeper.<sup>5</sup>

Probably Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz also would not have permitted his disciples to use Hindi names for God such as Rama and Krishna, although he informed one of them that the Hindi names of God were Alakh (Imperceptible) and Parmeshwar (Almighty) etc. and told them that they could also use alternative Hindi names. However he added that only such Hindi equivalents of God's names should be used as were compatible with the *Shari'a*. For example, he pointed out that the Persian and Turkish languages also had their own equivalents for God.<sup>6</sup> Four centuries earlier Makhdum Jahaniyan (707/1308-785/1384) had forbidden Muslims to invoke God by such Hindi names as Thakur (Lord), Dhani (Rich) or Kartar (Master),<sup>7</sup> although a *Masnawi* by Jalalu'd-Din Maulana Rumi had already solved this problem in the form of Divine censure of Moses who had taken offence at the prayer of a humble shepherd who had invoked the name of God in his own tongue rather than the illustrious language of the religious élite. Rumi continued:

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, pp. 180-82.

<sup>2</sup>*Miratu'l-haqa'iq*, British Museum MS., Rieu, III, 1034b, f. 261b.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 264b-265a.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, I, no. 266.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, 1, no. 167.

<sup>6</sup>*Malfuzat-i Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz*, Meerut, 1314/1896-97, pp. 44-45.

<sup>7</sup>*HSI*, p. 280.



A revelation came to Moses from God — 'Thou hast parted My servant from Me.

Didst thou come (as a prophet) to unite, or didst thou come to sever? So far as thou canst, do not set foot in separation: of (all) things the most hateful to Me is divorce.

I have bestowed on every one a (special) way of acting: I have given to every one a (peculiar) form of expression.

In regard to him it is (worthy of) praise, and in regard to thee it is (worthy of) blame: in regard to him honey, and in regard to thee poison. I am independent of all purity and impurity, of all slothfulness and alacrity (in worshipping Me).

I did not ordain (Divine worship) that I might make any profit; nay, but that I might do a kindness to (My) servants.

In the Hindoos the idiom of Hind (India) is praiseworthy; in the Sindians the idiom of Sind is praiseworthy.

I am not sanctified by their glorification (of Me); 'tis they that become sanctified and pearl-shattering (pure and radiant).

I look not at the tongue and the speech; I look at the inward (spirit) and the state (of feeling).

I gaze into the heart (to see) whether it be lowly, though the words uttered be not lowly.

Because the heart is the substance, speech (only) the accident; so the accident is subservient, the substance is the (real) object.

How much (more) of these phrases and conceptions and metaphors?

I want burning, burning: become friendly with that burning!

Light up a fire of love in thy soul, burn thought and expression entirely (away)!

O Moses, they that know the conventions are of one sort, they whose souls and spirits burn are of another sort . . .

To lovers there is a burning (which consumes them) at every moment: tax and tithe are not (imposed) on a ruined village.

If he (the lover) speak faultily, do not call him faulty; and if he be bathed in blood, do not wash (those who are) martyrs.

For martyrs, blood is better than water: this fault (committed by him) is better than a hundred right actions (of another).

Within the Ka'ba the rule of the *qibla* does not exist: what matter if the diver has no snow-shoes?

Do not seek guidance from the drunken; why dost thou order those whose garments are rent in pieces to mend them?

The religion of Love is apart from all religions: for lovers, the (only) religion and creed is—God.

If the ruby have not a seal (graven on it), 'tis no harm: Love in the sea of sorrow is not sorrowful.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nicholson, R.A., *The Mathnawi of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi*, II, London, 1926, pp. 311-12.



Sufis of all schools rejected the idea of Divine infusion or incarnation (*hulul*) and to them the Perfect Man, although endowed with Divine Attributes, was unequivocally not Divine. Thus Rumi wrote:

I am not a congener of the King of kings—far be it from Him !—but I have light from Him in (His) self-manifestation.

Homogeneity is not in respect of form and essence: water becomes homogeneous with earth in the plant.

Wind (air) becomes homogeneous with fire in consistency; wine at last becomes homogeneous with the constitution (of the body).

Since my *genus* is not the *genus* of my King, my ego has passed away (*fana*) for the sake of His ego.

Inasmuch as my ego passed away, He remained alone: I roll at the feet of His horse, like dust.

The (individual) soul (self) became dust, and the (only) signs of it are the mark of His feet on its dust.

Become dust at His feet for the sake of this mark, in order that you may become the crown on the head of the lofty.

Let not my form beguile you: partake of my desert before my departure.<sup>1</sup>

The way in which Jahangir criticised idol worship was generally accepted by a considerable number of sufis and theologians; he informed his court Brahmans:

If the doctrines of your religion are based on the incarnation (*hulul*) of the Holy Person of God Almighty in ten different forms by the process of metempsychosis, they are virtually rejected by the intelligent. This pernicious idea requires that the Necessary Being (Absolute), void of all limitations, should be possessed of length, breadth, and thickness. If the purpose is the manifestation of the Light of God in these bodies, that of itself is existent equally in all created things, and is not peculiar of these ten forms. If the idea is to establish some of God's attributes, even then there is no right notion, for in every faith and code there are masters of wonders and miracles distinguished beyond the other men of their age for wisdom and eloquence. After much argument and endless controversy, they (the Brahmans) acknowledged a God of gods, devoid of a body or accidents, and said: 'As our imagination fails to conceive [of] a formless being (*zat-i mujarrad*), we do not find any way to know Him without the aid of a form. We have therefore made these ten forms the means of conceiving of and knowing Him.' Then said I (Jahangir) 'How can these forms be a means of your approaching the Deity.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The *Mathnawi* of Jalalu'd-Din Rumi, II, pp. 281-82.

<sup>2</sup>Rogers, A., and Beveridge, H., *The Tazuk-i Jahangiri or Memoirs of Jahangir*, I, London, 1909-14, pp. 32-33; *Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, original, p. 14.



Emperor Jahangir and the Indian sufis were not prepared to accept the theory regarding the limitation (*ta'ayyun*) of the Absolute in any specific form and rejected forms of incarnation of God as *hulul*. However, their attitude towards idol worship was no different from that of Shabistari who wrote:

Since infidelity and faith are both based on Being,  
Idol-worship is essentially Unification (*Tawhid*).  
Since all things are the manifestors of Being,  
One amongst them must be an idol.  
Consider well, O wise man,  
An idol as regards its real being is not vain.

...

If the Musulman but knew what is faith,  
He would see that faith is idol-worship.  
If the polytheist only knew what idols are,  
How would he be wrong in his religion ?  
He sees in idols naught but the visible creature,  
And that is the reason that he is legally a heathen.  
You also, if you see not 'the Truth' hid in the idols,  
In the eye of the law are not a Musulman.  
By telling beads and saying prayers and reaching the Koran  
The heathen becomes not a Musulman.  
That man is disgusted with superficial faith (*Islam-i majazi*)  
To whom the true infidelity (*kufr-i haqiqi*) has once been revealed.  
Within every body is hidden a soul,  
And within infidelity is hidden true faith.<sup>1</sup>

The Mujaddid, however, asserted that sufis praised *kufr* (infidelity) and *zunnar* (brahmanical threads) only in a state of *sukr*, and that one should turn a blind eye towards such excesses. He distinguished between *kufr-i haqiqi* (true infidelity) and *Islam-i haqiqi* (true Islam) and wrote that according to the *Shari'a*, *kufr* was both depravity and a disease, while Islam stood for perfect faith. *Kufr-i Tariqat*, he believed, was a state of *jama'* (unification) in which mystics made no distinction between truth and falsehood. The *salik* (traveller on the mystical path) was involved in seeking a perception of the beauty of the Divine and therefore saw only the manifestations and the adumbrations of the *Wahdat*; inevitably such a mystic was at peace with everyone, believing every person to be on the true path. His attitude could be illustrated by this verse from the Qur'an:

Lo! I have put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord. Not an animal but He doth grasp it by the forelock! Lo! my Lord is on a straight path.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Whinfield, E.H., *Gulshan-i Raz*, London, 1880, pp. 83-84.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, XI, 56.



However the Mujaddid believed such sufis confused the epiphany of God with the 'ayn (essence) of the external, identifying creation with the 'ayn of Reality which perceived the servant (man) as the 'ayn of the Lord. All these misconceptions arose from the stage of unification, and prompted sufis such as Mansur al-Hallaj to cry, 'I became a *kafir* owing to the faith of Allah, and *kufr* is preferable to me.'

This type of *kufr-i Tariqa*, according to the Mujaddid, resembled the *kufr-i Shari'a*. Although *kafirs* against the *Shari'a* were damned, *kafirs* of the sufi Path were acceptable to God. He would also reward them, for they were annihilated in love of the true Beloved and all else was hidden from their vision. *Kufr* of the *Shari'a* was damnable because it emanated from ignorance and insolence. The Islamic *Tariqa*, on the other hand, emerged from the stage of *farq* (distinction) which preceded the stage of *jama'* (unification) and which distinguished between good and evil, virtue and vice. To the Mujaddid the *Shari'a* and the Islamic *Tariqa* were identical. However he warned his disciples that only those sufis who talked of peace under the influence of *sukr* deserved a high status, but the remainder who spoke the same way but sought to obliterate distinctions between good and evil were heretics and infidels, chiefly motivated to reject the *Shari'a* and misguide others. These sufis, according to the Mujaddid, had led large numbers of Muslims astray from the right path.<sup>1</sup>

The studies of Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti, convinced him that Mahadeva (one of the names of Siva) lived in the pre-Adam generation among the *genii* (*jinn*). He occupied a unique position among his fellow *genii* (proto man) as regards all his physical and spiritual existence. He would preach the *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) and exhibited an understanding of Divine secrets. According to the Shaikh, the verse from the Qur'an: 'I created the *jinn* and humankind only that they might worship Me'<sup>2</sup> confirmed that *genii* and demons were also gnostics. According to the *Tafsir-i Zahidi*, stated Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman, formerly demons and *genii* went to heaven where they heard the conversations of angels. It was only after the coming of the Prophet Muhammad that the road to the heavens was closed to them. The Shaikh argued that it was quite harmless to accept the idea that gnostics existed in pre-Muhammad times and that they received divine revelations. Moreover, according to him, sufis advised their disciples to select the virtues from all religious communities.<sup>3</sup>

The attitude of Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq of Bansa to Krishna, Rama and Lakshmana was also interesting. In his time Bairagis or Hindu mendicants enjoyed considerable prestige because they fought for the

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 222, 266, 268.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, LI, 56.

<sup>3</sup>*Mir'atu'l-makhlukat*, British Museum MSS., Rieu, III, 1034a, f. 240b.



Nawwabs of Awadh. Renowned for their courage, the Bairagis were admired by Hindus and Muslims alike for the intensity of their spirituality. Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq's relations with Champat, the leader of a group of Bairagis from Awadh, were very cordial and involved a large degree of mutual respect. Champat invariably invited Shah 'Abdu'r-Razzaq to theatrical performances featuring popular stories about Krishna and the gopis (cow-girls). Local Hindu and Muslim ascetic and zamindars were also often invited to such entertainments. So moved was the Shah that verses of Kabir always threw him into a state of ecstasy.

A number of miracles were associated with the Shah. On one occasion a disciple of Champat requested his *guru* to help him to experience a vision of Krishna. Champat, however, suggested that he make this request to his friend, the Shah. After the Shah had instructed him in some Hindi religious *mantras* the disciple had a vision.<sup>1</sup> On another occasion a Hindu ascetic called Parasram invited the Shah to a feast in celebration of the birth of Krishna. So many people gathered that there was insufficient food to feed them all. The Shah consoled his host by telling him that it was customary for ascetics to divide their food among all of them. Parasram replied that according to the Hindu custom each person had to be given a separate portion of uncooked food. The Shah then ordered his own son to write the words 'O! Ghausu'l A'zam' on the door of the kitchen. When the cereal was distributed it kept coming in such abundance that all the guests were more than satisfied.<sup>2</sup>

Another story associated with supernatural events allegedly took place when the Shah was travelling through the Deccan. Walking along a jungle road, he stopped near a pool and began his *'asr* (afternoon) prayers. A man on horseback came up and asked the Shah the name of his hometown, to which the Shah replied he was from Lucknow, in the Avadh province of Akhtarnagar. The man who later introduced himself as Lakshmana said that since the Shah came from Lucknow which was named after him<sup>3</sup> (Lakshman) the Shah was his guest. Suddenly a lion and a bear wandered up and sat down before the sufi. Later Lakshmana, accompanied by his brother Rama brought the Shaikh some sweets and told him that they were leaving the lion and the bear for his protection, also promising the following morning to show him the road to the village. In the morning the Shah spied two small boys leading a herd of cows and water buffaloes and they showed the Shah the road to the village. After travelling a short distance the Shah remembered the promise made by

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqib-i Razzaqiyya*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>In original Lakhnau, traditionally Lucknow is believed to have been named after Lakshman (Lakhman or Lachman) the brother of Rama. It is variously named as, Lakshmanpur, Lachmanpur and Lakhmanpur, changed into Lakhnau by the Muslims and Lucknow by the British.



Rama and Lakshmana. He returned to ask the boys their names, but they had vanished and their disappearance confirmed his belief that they were in fact the great Rama and Lakshmana.<sup>1</sup> Although the Shaikh did not explain his general attitude towards Krishna, Rama or Lakshmana, it would seem that he believed they had fully realized their essential oneness with the Divine Being in whose likeness they were made, being counterparts of the ontological Perfect Man of sufis.

The increasing knowledge of Hinduism revealed through Persian translations of Sanskrit works as well as by poetry written in local dialects, proved a source of great confusion to intelligent Muslims in respect of the question of the prophets whom God had sent to guide Indians. The Qur'an states:

And for every nation there is a messenger. And when their messenger cometh (on the Day of Judgement) it will be judged between them fairly, and they will not be wronged.<sup>2</sup>

And We never sent a messenger save with the language of his folk, that he might make (the message) clear for them. Then Allah sendeth whom He will astray and guideth whom He will. He is the Mighty, the Wise.<sup>3</sup>

Whosoever goeth right, it is only for (the good of) his own soul that the goeth right, and whosoever erreth, erreth only to its hurt. No laden soul can bear another's load. We never punish until We have sent a messenger.<sup>4</sup>

Lo! We have sent thee with the Truth, a bearer of glad tidings and a warner; and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them.<sup>5</sup>

Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din (d. 1575-76), the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, claimed that God had sent prophets to India who had preached *Tawhid* (Divine Unity) and ethical principles in the indigenous languages. However he believed that the devilish nature of later Hindus had prompted them to write books which, while they incorporated the teachings of the true prophets, were interpolated with ideas legitimizing idol worship and infidelity.<sup>6</sup>

The Mujaddid also wrote that in ancient times there was hardly any place where a prophet had not been sent by God. Contrary to common belief, prophets who invited people to believe in the True Creator had also been sent to India, and apparently in some parts of the sub-continent the light shed by these prophets had dispelled polytheism (*shirk*) like a candle

<sup>1</sup>*Manaqib-i Razzaqiyya*, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, X, 48.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, XIV, 4.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, XVII, 15.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, XXXV, 24.

<sup>6</sup>*Rushd-nama*, appendix, Aligarh University MS., f. 51a.



in the darkness. These places could be identified, but no one in that region bothered about such prophets or listened to their teachings. There were prophets in whom only four people believed, and even some who could muster only one follower. The Mujaddid maintained that the religious classics of the leading infidels (Hindus), dealing with the existence of the Divine Being. His attributes, transcendence and sanctification, had been purloined from lamps (teachings) set in the niches of prophets. By this the Mujaddid implied that the Hindu sages had plagiarized from the works of these ancient prophets. Without such works the slothful intellect of all the stupid, blind leaders of Hindus would have remained sunk in the darkness of infidelity and sinfulness, as they would not, according to the Mujaddid, in this case have had any access to the idea of the Unity of Being. These wretches were unable to think of anything other than claiming themselves to be God, just as the Pharaoh had asserted: 'I know not that ye (chiefs) have a god other than me.'<sup>1</sup> Again in another verse Pharaoh challenged Moses thus: 'If thou choosest a god other than me, I assuredly shall place thee among the prisoners.'<sup>2</sup>

Some infidels (Hindus), continued the Mujaddid, realizing that as their claims to be God were untenable, in order to hide their own divinity, admitted the existence of the Supreme Creator and claimed that He was infused into them, a pretext which was intended to make people worship them as gods.

However the Mujaddid warned that short-sighted people should refrain from asking him why God, if He had sent prophets to India, did not persistently inform the Muslims of this fact. The answer to this question was that the prophets sent to India had not been commissioned to disseminate the Divine message universally: their mission had been confined to a single community or the population of a particular village or town who were invited to recognize the Supreme Creator and prohibited from praying to anyone other than God. With few exceptions the Indian recipients of this message rejected it, even going to the extent of insulting and condemning its prophets. Accordingly God destroyed them, later sending another prophet to some other villages or communities. This process continued for a long time. In India there were many remains of ruined villages and towns. The Mujaddid believed that some followers of the prophets in these villages and communities had managed to preserve the teachings of those prophets. Thus, concluded the Mujaddid, only those prophets were well-known who had gathered many followers around them during their lifetime. Those who were followed by only a few never became widely known. Moreover the terms for prophets and apostles (*Risalat*, *Nabuwat* and *Paighambari*) were used in Arabic and Persian in order to maintain continuity with the message of the Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXVIII, 38.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, XXVI, 29.



But these terms had no counterparts in the languages of India, hence little was known about prophets and apostles in India. However, had prophets not been sent to India and preached the Divine message in the local languages. Indians, secure in their stubborn belief in their own divinity would have been saved from the fear of being consigned to a hell of incessant torture.<sup>1</sup>

The Mujaddid tried to prove the existence of prophets in India in the light of the Qur'anic verses and the stories of Pharaoh and Moses, as well as of the analogy of the destruction of disobedient members of the tribe of 'Ad<sup>2</sup> (after Noah), and of another tribe (the Sumud), some two hundred years later.<sup>3</sup> It would seem that the Mujaddid knew at least some of the translation of the Sanskrit classics made in the *Maktab Khana*<sup>4</sup> under Akbar and was certainly aware of the translation of the *Mahabharata*, part of which had been made by his father-in-law Hajji Sultan Thaneswari. However he was not prepared to accept Rama or Krishna, the most popular deities of the Hindu pantheon, as prophets.

The views of Mirza Jan-i Janan, a Mujaddidiyya who seems to have read at least the translation made under the auspices of the hated Dara-Shukoh were better reconciled to the Islamic theory of the abrogation of religions, and were better informed. The Mirza was asked to explain whether the infidels of India, like the pagans of Arabia, followed a religion without any true basis, or whether it was one which at some stage incorporated truths which were later abrogated. As regards ancient Indian prophets, the Mirza wrote:

The ancient books of the Indians show that in the beginning of the creation of the human species God sent a Book, named the *Bed* [Veda]. in four volumes, through an angel, called Brahma, in order to guide [Indians] regarding their duties in this world and the next. The *Vedas* contained Divine orders and prohibitions, didactic stories about the past and prophesies about the future. On the basis of the *Vedas* Indian jurists [sages] formulated six systems containing the basic principles of their religious beliefs. This science is known as the *Dharma-Shastra* or the science of religious belief or *kalam*. Human beings were divided into four classes and took from the *Vedas* their individual rules of conduct and social ethics. The latter became known as the *Karma-Shastra* or science of action, which can be identified with *Fiqh*.

According to our [Muslim] judgment it is essential there should be different laws for different times; however Hindus did not believe in the abrogation of divine law. Accordingly they divided time into four periods

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 260.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, VII, 65; IX, 70; XI, 50-60; XII, 9; XXV, 38; XLI, 13-16; L, 13; LIII, 50; LIV, 18-22; LXIX, 4, 6, 7; LXXXIX, 6-8.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 259.

<sup>4</sup>*RIM*, pp. 203-23.



called *yugas* (*jug*) for each of which there was a code of conduct derived from the *Vedas*. Later interpolations by scholars are unreliable. All sections of Hindus believe in God most High, consider the world to be created, believe in its ultimate destruction and in the day of resurrection: they also accept accountability for worldly deeds, the meting out of rewards and punishments (according to one's merits). They are expert in all the rational and traditional sciences, ascetic practices, the study of gnosis and intuitive knowledge.

Their sages divided the human life-span into four parts: the first being devoted to the acquisition of knowledge, the second to attending to worldly duties and the begetting of children, the third spent in self-purification and spiritual improvement and the fourth involving the severance of all relations with the world and the living of a secluded life. The last, the highest ideal in life, was necessary for complete emancipation. The rules and regulations of Hinduism are well established and this indicates that the religion was originally commendable but that it has now been abrogated. Although several religions have been obliterated and changed, the Islamic *Shari'a* mentions only the abrogation of the Jewish and Christian faiths. The following verses, as well as others in the Qur'an, confirm the existence of the prophets and apostles in India:

...and there is not a nation but a warner hath passed among them<sup>1</sup>

And for every nation there is a messenger . . .<sup>2</sup>

The sacred books of the Hindus give an account of their prophets, and their traditions indicate that the prophets were both perfect and great. Therefore the Universal Divine Mercy did not ignore the interests of the people of such a vast country. Before the advent of the last of the prophets [i.e. Muhammad], all nations were sent 'warners,' each one being expected to obey only the teachings of his own respective prophet. After the advent of our prophet, who was sent to all mankind, his religion [i.e. Islam] superseded all previous ones, from the east to west. Until the day of resurrection no one had any alternative but to obey him. Therefore from the time of his mission until that day of 1180/1766-67 [on which these words were written] any who did not believe in this religion [Islam] were infidels (excluding of course those who preceded the Prophet Muhammad). The *Shari'a* was reticent about many of the prophets, for the Qur'an says:

Verily We sent messengers before thee, among them those of whom

We have told thee, and some of whom We have not told thee . . .<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, Mirza Jan-i Janan continued, in view of this verse it is preferable not to talk too loosely about the prophets of India. We should neither confidently accuse them and their followers of disbelief and

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XXXV, 24.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, X, 48.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, XL, 78.



relegate them to perdition, nor should we affirm a belief in their salvation. Had the question been dispassionately examined, our judgment about the Hindus would have been proven to be right. Identical would be our attitude to the religion of the people of Persia and all other countries who were part of the pre-Muhammad age about which the *Shari'a* had nothing positive to say. Their (the old religious) code of conduct and traditions followed the path of moderation.

'Without convincing evidence no one should be called an infidel,' said Mirza Jan-i Janan. The secret of idol worship is this: 'there were certain angels who by divine decree directed the affairs of the phenomenal world. Similarly there were certain perfect souls who even abandoned their bodies to continue to exercise power over the world. And also, according to the Hindus, there were personalities who, like Khizr, were immortal. While carving human forms, Hindus meditated on these and after some time developed a spiritual relationship with the person about whom they were meditating on. Owing to the special aspects of this relationship, they prayed [to these idols] for fulfilment of their needs in this world and the next. This practice resembled sufi meditation with the form of the *pir* in mind (*rabita*), the only difference being that sufis did not make a physical representation. This practice differed, however, from the pagan Arab belief that idols themselves were powerful, potent authorities and effective in their own right. The Arabs had considered their idols as the lords of heaven and earth, which was sheer polytheism. The Hindu custom of prostration was a form of greeting and was not intended as an act of idol-worship; it was identical to the traditional prostration made to parents or teachers by Muslims in the place of a greeting. The Hindus called their prostration *dandwat* (salutation). Moreover a belief in transmigration of the soul was not itself infidelity or polytheism.'<sup>1</sup>

On an earlier occasion Mirza Jan-i Janan's response had been similar. A member of a discussion group led by the Mirza's teacher, Hajji Muhammad Afzal, told the gathering that he had had a dream about a field blazing with fire. In the fire was Krishna and on the edge of it was Rama. This was interpreted to mean that the punishment of hell-fire was meted out to the leading infidels, Krishna and Rama. The Mirza however suggested that ancient sages should not be accused of infidelity unless the condemnation was unequivocally supported by the *Shari'a*. As the Qur'an specifically promised 'warners' for every place on earth, it was possible that Rama and Krishna were saints, even prophets. The Mirza claimed that Rama flourished before the creation of genii in a period when people enjoyed incredible longevity and were physically powerful, and therefore Rama was able to guide his people on the path of *suluk* (ascetic exercises). In the days of Krishna, who was born long after Rama, people

<sup>1</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhari*, pp. 99-101.



were comparatively short in stature and physically feeble and Krishna therefore chose to guide his people in *jazb* (ecstasy). The excessive indulgence in music and *sama*<sup>1</sup> attributed to him was a proof, according to the Mirza, of Krishna's preference for ecstasy rather than ascetic exercises. In the dream, fire symbolized the heat of love, and the fact that Krishna was immersed in it indicated his involvement with ecstasy, while Rama, who followed the path of ascetic exercises (*suluk*), was naturally only at the edge of the fire. Hajji Muhammad Afzal was extremely pleased with this interpretation and endorsed it.

Another anecdote was told by Abu Salih Khan, a *khalifa* of Hajji Muhammad Afzal. Once when Abu Salih went to Mathura he was desperately in need of seven rupees. While performing midnight prayers (*tahajjud*) a man appeared before him who fitted the description of Krishna he had been given by Hindu friends. The visitor greeted Abu Salih and gave him seven rupees, and then told him he was Krishna and that the gift had been because he was a guest in his territory. Abu Salih protested saying he was a Muhammadi (Muslim) and that he always begged the Prophet Muhammad to fulfil his needs, rejecting everything else from other sources. Krishna wept, saying he had heard of the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad and the sincerity of his followers but that Abu Salih's behaviour was much nobler than any expectations he may have had.<sup>1</sup>

The Mirza's understanding of Indian prophets rested firmly within the framework of Qur'anic verses regarding ancient prophets and abrogated religions. Although his approach to Rama and Krishna was better informed than that of the Mujaddid, nevertheless he was unable to sympathise with those Hindus who doggedly continued to follow their own abrogated Hinduism after the advent of Islam.

Following the same concept of the appointment of prophets and apostles in various places and among different communities, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, made his own important contribution. He stated that in all nations there had been 'warners' who had prevented people from indulging in vices and usurping the rights of others who were not necessarily prophets but were either '*ulama*', preachers, saints or gnostics. But if one researched into the history of Turkey, Abyssinia, Cathay, China and Tartary, no prophet could be discovered and in fact the people of these countries were probably not even aware of the term itself. Their beliefs were influenced by an excessive worship of their ascetics and recluses. Moreover God treated different people in different ways, keeping in mind discrepancies in understanding and competence. But in Arabia, from the Yemen to Syria, and in Egypt, Divine guidance was offered on a

<sup>1</sup>*Maqamat-i Mazhari*, pp. 23-24.



uniform pattern, and the prophets who were sent there performed miracles. The reason for this form of guidance was that the people of these territories were accustomed to receiving esoteric knowledge delivered by men, although this was imparted at long intervals and in farflung places.

Nevertheless the messenger was recognized whether he delivered oral messages or documents (revelations which were later written down). A messenger was forced to present his credentials just like visitors to the courts of members of the nobility, kings and sultans. Although Hindus were unaccustomed to such methods of revelation, they believed in the self-manifestation of the Absolute in particular objects or in certain actions or speeches. They considered those who performed miracles to be able to rule people as vicegerents of God. The people of India were examples of those to whom such a form of teaching appealed, and counsel and admonitions were therefore written down for them. As the *Yoga-Vasishtha*, *Ramayana* and the *Bhagavad-Gita* show, this method remained current from earliest times until the time of Vyasa. Misled by the devil, Vyasa destroyed the ancient religion of the Hindus and introduced idol worship and polytheism. Thereafter all Hindus followed suit. The class distinctions between Kayasthas, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas (bankers) were very ancient. However, such distinctions were also found in the ancient religious laws of a number of other peoples. For example, each class of the Israelite community was governed by a specific law, and even the Islamic *Shari'a* sanctioned class-distinctions. Thus the Hashimites were entitled to appropriate *khums*<sup>1</sup> but not *zakat*;<sup>2</sup> the Quraish were singled out and privileged to be caliphs; the polytheists of Arabia could not be allowed to survive by paying *jizya*—they were either killed or accepted Islam.

The Hindu *avatars*, or the incarnations of God, continued Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, were forms of Divine manifestation, whether as man, lion or fish, just like the rod of Moses<sup>3</sup> or the she-camel of Salih.<sup>4</sup> But ordinary ignorant Hindus were unable to distinguish between the external form

<sup>1</sup>One-fifth share in the booty.

<sup>2</sup> $2\frac{1}{2}\%$  alms tax on certain category of commodities.

<sup>3</sup>According to the *Qur'an* the rod ('*asa*') of Moses was an ordinary type of stick on which he often leaned, sometimes plucked leaves for his sheep by it and used it in many other ways (*Qur'an*, XX, 18). However in order to defeat the magicians of Pharaoh God endowed Moses' rod with miraculous powers enabling it to overcome the sorcery of the magicians (*Qur'an*, VII, 117). According to two other references to the rod in the *Qur'an*, it turned into a serpent; in later legends incredible miracles are assigned to the rod.

<sup>4</sup>Salih was also a prophet who was sent to the Arabian Samuel people in order to invite them to pray to Allah alone. The strong ones among the Arabs rejected him and only the weak ones followed (*Qur'an*, VII, 73-75). Allah sent them as a sign a she-camel (*Qur'an*, XVII, 59) but they did not allow it to eat or drink water and killed it (*Qur'an*, VII, 73-77; XXVI, 155-57).



and the epiphany of God, seeing the Divine in everything. A large number of Muslims, added the Shah, committed similar aberrations, such as manufacturing *ta'zias*, caring for the graves of saints and also numbering the Jalalis<sup>1</sup> and the Madaris.<sup>2</sup>

The Mujaddid also developed ideas along the lines that Islam and Hinduism were the antithesis of each other and therefore could not co-exist. He argued that in fact the Muslims had been divinely commissioned to be enemies of infidels and to treat them harshly. Respect shown to infidels was tantamount to an insult to Islam, and its glory depended on the disparaging of infidels; in fact he asserted that the imposition of *jizya* had been ordained to outrage and undermine them. The Qur'an called attention to the duties of Muslims in these words :

O Prophet ! Strive against the disbelievers and the hypocrites !  
Be harsh with them.<sup>3</sup>

To the Mujaddid the execution of the Sikh leader Guru Arjan was a great Islamic victory, irrespective of the motives [which were in actual fact political] behind it.<sup>4</sup> No stone should be left unturned, he wrote to Shaikh Farid Bukhari, in efforts to both secretly and overtly destroy the enemies of the Prophet Muhammad (Hindus). Their chiselled and unchiselled idols should be insulted in every possible way, and thanks be returned to God by Muslims that they were saved from the misery of worshipping idols.<sup>5</sup> To Lala Beg he wrote that infidels would not be satisfied merely by promulgating their own laws of infidelity, but would wish completely to obliterate Islamic laws, the Muslim community and Islam. Cow sacrifice, for example, was a significant aspect of Islamic custom; but infidels, although they were prepared to pay the *jizya* would never consent to cow slaughter.<sup>6</sup>

Friedmann suggests that :

All the violent expressions of hostility against them (the Hindus) in the first volume of the *Maktubat* are included in letters addressed to nobles of the Mughul court. Sirhindi's intention in these letters is to undermine the position of the Hindus in the Mughul administration, rather than to fight their contacts with Muslims in other areas of life.<sup>7</sup>

These conclusions follow a comment made in a letter to Mulla Maqsd 'Ali Tabrizi<sup>8</sup> relating to a Shi'i-Sunni controversy which he misunderstood, as did the earlier scholars whom he followed. However

<sup>1</sup>HSI, p. 320.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 319-20; *Majmua'-i Fatawa-i 'Azizi*, I, pp. 140-41.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, IX, 73; *Maktubat*, I, 163.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, I, 193.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, I, 269.

<sup>6</sup>ibid, I, 81.

<sup>7</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, p. 74.

<sup>8</sup>*Maktubat*, III, 22. In the original Maqsd 'Ali is called Mulla, but Friedmann wrongly calls him a Sufi, *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi* p. 75.



Friedmann's conclusions in this connection call for some comments. He says :

letters containing overt references to India and its Hindu inhabitants constitute only a small proportion of the *Maktubat*. Most of them are addressed to officials of the Mughul court. It seems to us that Sirhindi's view of the Hindus—in the few cases when it is directly expressed—is determined not by the development of his ideas on the matter, but rather by the context in which he is writing. Sirhindi objected to Hindu participation in the government; he therefore expresses his hostility towards Hindus in letters to government officials who presumably had the power to purge the administration of Hindu influence. On the other hand, the few references to Hindus in letters addressed to his fellow Sufis are relatively mild.<sup>1</sup>

These remarks suggest either that the author intends to gloss over the Mujaddid's hostility towards Hindus, or that he does not have a deep scientific perception of the social and political teachings and environment of the Mujaddid, whose hatred of Hindus did not emanate merely from the political dominance of the Hindus and the Shi'is in the governments of Akbar and Jahangir, but was much deeper rooted. Sirhind was a commercial centre and of strategic importance as well as being the home of many rich Hindu and Muslim merchants. Not far from Sirhind was Govindwal, where the Sikh, Guru Arjan, had established a strong centre of mysticism, attracting not only Hindus but also Muslims.<sup>2</sup> Moreover Thaneswar, near Sirhind, had also been an important Hindu pilgrimage centre. It was here, in Akbar's reign, that the Mujaddid's father-in-law, Hajji Sultan Thaneswari, was executed. A talented scholar, the Hajji was for some years engaged by Akbar in the translation of the *Mahabharata*. Like Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qadir Badau'ni, however, he undertook the job only for money and influence, greatly despising the work itself. Later the Hindus of Thaneswar accused him of cow-killing and he was banished to Bhakkar. There he became a friend of 'Abdu'r-Rahim Khan-i Khanan, the governor of the province, on whose recommendation Akbar revoked his banishment of the Hajji, allowing him to remain in Thaneswar. About 1593 another recommendation of the Khan-i Khanan's enabled Hajji Sultan to obtain the post of Karori.<sup>3</sup> It would seem that the Hajji then followed a course of retaliation against those who had helped secure his removal which included a large section of the population. When Akbar returned from the Panjab and journeyed through Thaneswar, the local people appealed to him for justice and the Hajji was hanged at the end of

<sup>1</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup>An officer of a unit in *khalisa* (land administered directly by the Emperor) yielding a crore (ten million *dams*) as revenue.



December 1598.<sup>1</sup> A few months previously, a Muslim Karori from Kunjah had also received capital punishment.

Naturally the Mujaddid and orthodox Muslims were not concerned over the cruelty of Muslim officers, being more interested in humiliating Hindus and opposed to their receiving justice as far as crimes committed by Muslims were concerned. But when a Hindu raja from Nagarkot (near Sirhind) who had fought both Akbar and Jahangir invaded neighbouring towns and killed their Muslim inhabitants, the Mujaddid's opposition was aroused.<sup>2</sup> Then he was unable to perceive the smallest merit in either Hinduism or its adherents. Like Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani, the founder of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, who was a great and unceasing opponent of Buddhists, the Mujaddid linked hatred of Hindus with his religious and mystical mission. This was exhibited in letters to both members of the nobility and sufis; the tone of the language makes little difference to the basic hostility of the Mujaddid against Hindus exhibited in his teachings.

Deeply concerned that Indian sufis should pay allegiance to the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, which he believed differed little from the Unity of Being of the yogis, he urged that, like yogis they should not attach any importance to severe mystical exercises. Writing to Sufi Qurban who lived in Urganj (in Uzbekistan, now in the U.S.S.R.), who seems to have been interested in Hindu ascetic practices, the Mujaddid said that the meditational and ascetic exercises of misguided people (Hindu yogis) did them little good for they did not obey the laws of the *Shari'a*, therefore they were trifling and contemptible. From those exercises they merely gained some worldly benefits which were worthless. Their position could be compared with that of a sweeper who worked hard but received poor wages. Conversely, the followers of the *Shari'a* could be compared to diamond merchants who reaped huge profits from undemanding labour<sup>3</sup>.

To Saiyid Husain Manikpuri, the Mujaddid wrote that although yogis, Brahmins and Greek philosophers performed hard ascetic exercises, perdition and ruin were their only rewards.<sup>4</sup> He made similar remarks in his letters to Mulla 'Abdu'l-Ghafur Samarqandi.<sup>5</sup> To his *khalifa*, Mir Muhammad Nu'man, he wrote that the maxim, '*Shari'a* is under the sword,' was intended to confirm that the illustrious Holy Law depended on the wise government of great sultans. As for some time practically no attention had been paid to the *Shari'a*, Islam had inevitably become enfeebled. Indian infidels (the Hindus) had been recklessly demolishing mosques and erecting their own temples in their place. In Thaneshwar there originally had been a mosque and the tomb of a sufi. The infidels had demolished them and erected an imposing temple on the site. Again,

<sup>1</sup>*Akbar-nama*, III, p. 748.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 114.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, no. 221.

<sup>4</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 69.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, no. 206, 266.



infidels freely performed heretical ceremonies while Muslims were unable to observe Islamic customs. On *Ikadashi*, a Hindu fasting day, they did not allow any Muslims to cook and sell food in bazaar. During the Muslim sacred month of Ramazan, Hindus openly cooked and publicly sold food. Due to the impotence of Islam no one could stop them. 'Alas a thousand times alas! the Emperor belongs to our faith and we the *faqirs* are in this miserable and wretched condition.<sup>1</sup>

Towards the end of his life, the Mujaddid wrote to Khwaja Husamu'd-Din that it was possible that some infidels who exhibited a certain degree of love for God were able to develop mystical ecstasy but that without obeying the *Shari'a* of the Prophet they were doomed.<sup>2</sup>

Following the lead of S.M. Ikram and Aziz Ahmad, Friedmann offered a number of erroneous theories about the change in the Mujaddid's attitude towards Hindus. He says :

Shaikh Muhammad Ikram has suggested<sup>3</sup> that Sirhindi's attitude towards the Hindus softened at the end of his life. He quotes letter 22 of the third volume as evidence for this thesis. In the letter Sirhindi discusses the question of whether contacts between Muslims and infidels are permissible. He refers to the tradition according to which the Prophet had a meal with a Jew and quotes the Qur'anic verse which declares the food of the People of the Book lawful for Muslims.<sup>4</sup> He maintains that the impurity of the polytheists is not 'essential' (*najas-i 'ayn*); the verse saying that 'the polytheists are impure'<sup>5</sup> indicates impurity of belief (*khubth-i i'tiqad*) only. Sirhindi thus reaches the conclusion that contacts with the polytheists have never been forbidden and that in the conditions of India they are even inevitable.<sup>6</sup>

Ikram's contention that this letter reflects a more moderate attitude towards the Hindus, adopted by Sirhindi at the end of his life, may be correct. The interpretation of Aziz Ahmad, who maintains that the letter was written to distinguish Sirhindi's 'religio-social separatism from Hindu caste-system'<sup>7</sup> also deserves careful consideration. However, we must not lose sight of another factor during our discussion of this apparent modification of Sirhindi's attitude towards the Hindus.<sup>8</sup> These views are based on a lack of perception of the nature of the controversy and its background. The controversy was over the conflicting Shi'i and Sunni interpretations of the verse in the Qur'an which says,

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 92.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, III, no. 121.

<sup>3</sup>In *Rud-i Kawthar*, Karachi, n.d., p. 204. Note: see also Muejeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, London, 1967, p. 244. [In *Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, p. 74, note 20].

<sup>4</sup>*Qur'an*, V. 5.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, IX, 28.

<sup>6</sup>*Maktubat*, III, no. 22.

<sup>7</sup>Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*, Oxford, 1964, p. 185.

<sup>8</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, p. 74.



'...the polytheists (*mushrikin*) are surely unclean.'<sup>1</sup> The Shi'is interpret the word unclean (*najas*) to mean that they should not touch polytheists nor should they eat or drink anything touched by them; clothes laundered by idolaters should not even be worn. The Shi'is also interpreted the following verse extremely narrowly:

...The food of those who have received the Scripture is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them.<sup>2</sup>

To the Shi'is food meant such grains as wheat, barley and chick peas, but not cooked food. Like all Sunnis, the Mujaddid interpreted both *najas* and *najas-i 'ayn* (uncompromisingly unclean) as impurity of belief, never imposing restrictions on physical contact. He also considered the Shi'i interpretation of cooked food to be rather far-fetched. Mulla Maqṣud 'Alī Tabrizi, who seems to have been a Shi'i or newly converted to Sunnism, neither ate food nor drank water touched by Hindus, nor did he eat the food of those who bought oil or milk from Hindus. In order to substantiate his theological beliefs about Shi'i eating rules the Mulla sent the Mujaddid a copy of the *Tafsir-i Husaini* by Kamalū'd-Dīn Husain bin 'Alī Wa'iz Kashifi (d. 910/1504). Criticizing the Mulla's action, the Mujaddid affirmed that the author of the work had interpreted the verses in conformity with the beliefs of the Hanafiyya *imams*. Moreover, he continued, Ibn 'Abbās<sup>3</sup> view that *mushriks* were no better than dogs (*najas-i 'ayn*) should be interpreted differently for many leading Muslim sages endorsed Ibn 'Abbās' statements. *Mushriks* could not be *najas-i 'ayn* because the Prophet Muhammad had eaten the food of Jews and had used the pot of a *mushrik* for ablutions. Knowing that Shi'is rejected such interpretations the Mujaddid asserted that the Hanafiyya *imams* had created many facilities for Muslims in order to help them avoid unlawful deeds. The *imams* should be admired for their achievements and not condemned. *Mujtahids*<sup>4</sup> were rewarded even for their errors. Moreover people who considered the food and drink of infidels taboo were moving towards a course which was impracticable, particularly in India, and likely to create great hardship for Sunnis.<sup>5</sup>

### *The Hindu saints and sufis*

The most famous of the Hindu yogis during the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir was Gosa'in Jadrup. When returning from Asirgarh in 1601, Akbar visited him<sup>6</sup> and in 1616-17 his son, Jahangir, also visited the yogi

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, IX, 28. Qazi Nuru'llah Shustari wrote a treatise on the subject.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, V, 5.

<sup>3</sup>Abdu'llah ibn al-'Abbās, (b. 619 AD d. 68/687-88) a father of Qur'anic exegesis enjoyed respect of both the Sunnis and the Shi'is.

<sup>4</sup>*Ulama'* exercising their individual judgments on Muslim legal questions.

<sup>5</sup>*Maktubat*, III, 22.

<sup>6</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, English translation, I, p. 357.



at Ujjain.<sup>1</sup> In 1618-19 Jahangir made two subsequent visits there,<sup>2</sup> and the following year he again visited Gosa'in at Mathura where the yogi had moved. Later Jahangir gave a detailed, highly enthusiastic account of his visit, extolling Gosa'in's virtues and ascetic eminence:

God Almighty has granted him an unusual grace, a lofty understanding, an exalted nature, and sharp intellectual powers, with a God-given knowledge and a heart free from attachments of the world, so that, putting behind his back the world and all that is in it, he sits content in the corner of solitude and without wants. He has chosen of worldly goods half a *gaz* (yard) of old cotton (*kirpas*) like a woman's veil, and a piece of earthenware from which to drink water, and in winter and summer and the rainy season lives naked and with his head and feet bare. He has made a hole in which he can turn round with a hundred difficulties and tortures, with a passage such that a suckling could hardly be put through it. These two or three couplets of Hakim Sana'i (d. 1130-31) appeared appropriate:

#### Verse

Luqman<sup>3</sup> had a narrow hut,  
Like the hollow of a flute or the bosom of a harp.  
A noodle [-head] put the question to him—  
What is this house—two feet and a span?  
Hotly and with tears the sage replied—  
'Ample for him who has to die.'<sup>4</sup>

Gosa'in Jadrup's own reaction to Jahangir's rule is quite remarkable. He said:

In what language can I return thanks for this gift of Allah that I am engaged in the reign of such a just King in the worship of my own Deity in ease and contentment, and that the dust of discomposure from any accident settles not on the spirit of my purpose?<sup>5</sup>

Also interesting were the comments of Shaikh Badi'u'd-Din Saharanpuri who also claims to have visited Gosa'in Jadrup. He related that Gosa'in had told him that the Mujaddid was superior to all other spiritual guides. However, when asked why he did not become the Mujaddid's disciple, Gosa'in answered that, being himself a prominent Hindu saint,

<sup>1</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, English translation I, p. 356.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, II, pp. 49-52.

<sup>3</sup>Name of a certain wise man said by some to have been a son of Job's sister or aunt; by others, to have been a disciple of David; by others, a judge in Israel: while others declare him to have been an emancipated Ethiopian slave, and author of the fables current under his name. F. Steingass, *Persian-English Dictionary*, fourth impression, London, p. 1126.

<sup>4</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, English translation, II, p. 105.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 52-53.



he was far from needing the assistance of someone else.<sup>1</sup>

Most interesting was the gradual change in the pattern of sufi thinking about Kabir, whose *Bishunpads* had become famous throughout northern India in his own lifetime. Once Shaikh Rezqu'llah Mushtaqi asked his father, Shaikh Sa'du'llah (d. 928/1522), whether Kabir was a Muslim or an infidel. The reply was that he was a *muwahhid* (follower of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*). Shaikh Rizqu'llah then asked his father whether a *muwahhid* was different from a Muslim and an infidel. Shaikh Sa'du'llah replied that the truth was difficult to understand and such knowledge could only be acquired gradually.<sup>2</sup>

Abu'l-Fazl mentioned Kabir in connection with the history of Konarak (Orissa) as well as of Awadh (Ayodhya). Both places claimed that Kabir was buried there. Both accounts call Kabir a *muwahhid*. In his account of Konarak, Abu'l-Fazl wrote :

Until this day people ascribe to him innumerable religious truths and doings. Owing to his own catholicity and lofty vision he considered both Muslims and Hindus his friends and when he died Brahmans wished to cremate him and Muslims to bury him.<sup>3</sup>

In connection with his account of Awadh, Abu'l-Fazl wrote: Kabir lived in the reign of Sikandar Lodi. The portals of spiritual discernment were partly opened to him and he discarded the effete doctrines of his own days. Innumerable Hindi verses of his containing spiritual truth are still extant.<sup>4</sup>

According to Dara-Shukoh, Kabir was one of the perfect gnostics of India. He was the disciple of Ramanand Mundiya, but was a leader on a path he carved out himself. Although he was a weaver, he was a leading inventor of pithy sayings. He composed a large number of Hindi verses relating to *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*). Both Muslims and infidels, according to Dara-Shukoh, considered him as belonging to their own respective faith but Kabir himself was far removed from them all. Before his death, Muslims and Hindu disciples began quarrelling as to whether to bury or cremate his body. He told them that if they found his dead body they could do whatever they wished with it. Then he locked the doors and died. When his cell was opened, nothing but some flowers were found there and the quarrel came to an end.

It is said that once when Kabir had cooked bread for himself, a dog

<sup>1</sup>Hazaratu'l-quds, II, p. 287; HSI, I, p. 373.

<sup>2</sup>AA, p. 300.

<sup>3</sup>A'in-i Akbari, II, p. 53.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, II, p. 78. Vaudeville, like other scholars who could not consult the works of Abu'l-Fazl and Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq in the Persian original, gives a confused and distorted version of the concepts surrounding a *muwahhid* and a Muslim. *Kabir*, I, Oxford, 1974, pp. 33-34.



came and ran away with it; Kabir chased the dog with some butter in his hand, crying that bread should be eaten with butter.

People who censured and refused to accept his teachings accused Kabir of ruining himself. Kabir pleaded guilty, affirming that he had united with Reality and improved himself just as copper was changed by amalgamation with an elixir, other trees were changed by coming into contact with the sandalwood tree, and a stream was changed when it reached the ocean.

Kabir also said that human beings should not resemble the gravel on the road in humility, for gravel hurt the feet of the traveller, but that they should be more like dust which did not cause any trouble to the feet. Even this would not be perfect, he went on, for dust troubles the head and face of the traveller. Men should see to it that nothing disturbed them, they should be like God. Even this was not the final goal, for God brought everything into existence; they should completely annihilate themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The author of the *Dabistan-i Mazahib* placed Kabir against the background of the legends of the Vaishnavite *vairagis* (mendicants) with whom he was identified,<sup>2</sup> but a contemporary of his, Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Chishti, combined both the *Bairagi* and the *muwahhid* traditions about Kabir in his *Mir'atu'l-asrar* and also made him a Firdausiyya sufi.

He wrote:

Makhdum Shaikh Bhikh who lies buried at Bilahri, four *kos* from Awadh, was a leading disciple of Shaikh Jamal Gujar . . . One of the eminent *khalifas* of Makhdum Shaikh Bhikh was Kabir *malamati*.<sup>3</sup> At the beginning of his mystic career, Kabir was a disciple of Shaikh Taqi bin Shaikh Ramazan Ha'ik (a weaver) Suhrawardi. Shaikh Taqi's grave is in Jhusi near Allahabad. Later Kabir *malamati* became a disciple of Ramanand Bairagi<sup>4</sup> and did hard ascetic exercises. The predominance of *Tawhid* in his mystic perception caused him to ignore the externalists ('*ulama*'), and he began to express mystic thoughts without any inhibition. The externalists condemned him as having turned into an infidel, but gnostics and experts in esoteric knowledge considered him a frank *muwahhid*. He lived like *malamatiyya* ecstasies. Finally he obtained the Firdausiyya *khirqah* from Shaikh Bhikh and found spiritual comfort in *sulh-i kul* (universal concord). His tomb at Maghar in Gorakhpur is visited by a large number of people.

Shaikh Kabir Malamati's son, Shaikh Kamal, obtained spiritual training from his father and followed *malamatiyya* practises. Compared with his father, he was more frank and fearless. After his father's

<sup>1</sup>Hasnatu'l-'arifin, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>Dabistan-i Mazahib, pp. 200-1.

<sup>3</sup>According to the *Ma'arifu'l-wilayat*, Shaikh Taqi was a Chishtiyya, ff. 344b-45a.

<sup>4</sup>HSI, p. 373.



death, he went away to Gujarat where Shah-i 'Alam (817/1415-880/1475) received him most respectfully and warmly. He became exceedingly famous in Ahmadabad and died there.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi, the author of the *M'ariju'l-wilayat* wrote: Shaikh Kabir *jolaha* (weaver) is the disciple of Shaikh Taqi.<sup>2</sup> Kabir was one of the perfect *awliya'* (sufis) and the most famous gnostic of his age but he chose for himself the sufic path of the *malamatiyya*. This technique he adopted in order to remain unknown. His Hindi poetry is sublime and is a proof of the eminence of the author. If his poetry is carefully examined it is found full of ideas of unification (*wisal*), with little mention of separation. He was a pioneer in expressing spiritual truth and gnosis through the medium of Hindi. He wrote a great variety of Hindi poetry, and his *Bishunpads* and *sakhis* are very famous. Those who do proper justice to Kabir's poetry are convinced that no other poetry can match it in expressing Divine secrets and spiritual truth. Muhaqqiq-i Hindi (Ja'isi) imitated the style of Kabir, but he chose the medium of *Soratha*,<sup>3</sup> and *dohas*<sup>4</sup> through which to express his thoughts. Kabir's spiritual eminence attracted both Muslims and Hindus to his discipleship. Each religious group considered him to be a member of its own religion, but in reality he transcended all religious distinctions. Were someone to assert that Kabir had only Hindu followers this claim would still not undermine his *wilayat* (position as an eminent sufi). An earlier example of a similar situation was the devotion of the Rafizis (Shi'is) to the fourth Caliph, 'Ali, which did not undermine the reputation of the latter, but on the contrary established the greatness of 'Ali, to whom even the irreligious (Shi'is) were drawn. 'Abdu'llah Khweshgi concluded his notice on Kabir by quoting about twenty of Kabir's verses with sufic explanations.<sup>5</sup>

Mufti Muhammad Ghulam Sarwar, who in his *Khazinatul-asfiya'* summarized the account of Kabir given in the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, like the author of the latter work, completely omitted to mention Kabir's discipleship to Ramanand and concluded that among the Muslims Kabir was known as a *pir-i kabir* (Kabir *pir*) and the Hindus called him Bhagat Kabir.<sup>6</sup>

### *Hindu mysticism and Dara-Shukoh*

During his early studies, Dara could not have ignored the various

<sup>1</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, f. 499b.

<sup>2</sup>According to the *Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, Shaikh Taqi, the *pir* of Kabir was also a weaver and lived in Kara-Manikpur (*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 344b-45a). See HSI, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup>The name of a metre in Hindi poetry.

<sup>4</sup>Hindi couplet.

<sup>5</sup>*Ma'ariju'l-wilayat*, ff. 345a-47a.

<sup>6</sup>*Khazinatul-asfiya'*, pp. 446-47.



Persian translations of Sanskrit works in Akbar's *Maktab-Khana* (translation bureau) and other Sanskrit works translated during Jahangir's reign and these quite possibly aroused his interest in Hindu philosophy and mysticism. Moreover there were a number of Sanskrit scholars at Shahjahan's court whom the Emperor had liberally rewarded and to whom he gave ostentatious Sanskrit titles. Banwali Das Wali, one of Dara's secretaries, had been instructed in sufism by Mulla-Shah and was a historian, translator and poet. Another of Dara's secretaries, Rai Chandrabhan Brahman, can only be described as a genius.<sup>1</sup> Jagannath Misra<sup>2</sup> and Kavindracharya<sup>3</sup> Sarasvati of Banaras, both eminent Sanskritists, were also attached to Dara-Shukoh's entourage. During the Prince's Qandahar campaign in 1063/1653 Tantrists (such as Indra Giri), yogis and their disciples, and Muslim holy men were ordered by Dara-Shukoh to use their magical powers against the enemy. An account of their role in the siege, documented in a diary by Rashid Khan Badi' al-Zaman, reads like a melodrama.<sup>4</sup> However, one must remember that in those days both the devil and angels were traditionally invoked to achieve worldly success; even the orthodox Aurangzib was known to have called on the power of talismans during the Satnami rebellion.

Returning from the unsuccessful campaign in Qandahar, Dara-Shukoh remained in Lahore from the last week of November until the middle of December 1653. There he held conversations with Baba Lal, a well-informed Vaishnavite mendicant.

Dara-Shukoh described Baba Lal as a *mundiya* (shaven-headed monk) and a follower of Kabir's school.<sup>5</sup> According to Wilson's research, Baba

<sup>1</sup>Chandrabhan Brahman, the son of Dharam-Das Brahman was born at Lahore and obtained higher education in Islamic philosophy and theology under Mulla 'Abdu'l-Hakim Siyalkoti. First he served as secretary of 'Allami Afzal Khan (Mulla Shukru'llah Shirazi) whom Shahjahan in 1038/1629 had appointed his *Diwan-i Kull*. After Afzal Khan's death in 1048/1639, Shahjahan in 1055/1645 appointed him as the *Waqi'a-nawis-i Huzur* and he was required to accompany the Emperor to his campaign of Badakhshan and to prepare a diary of daily events. After about two years he became Dara-Shukoh's secretary. After the death of Dara-Shukoh he retired to lead the life of a recluse in Banaras and died there in 1073/1662-3. On the model of Abu'l-Fazl's style of epistolography, he developed a unique style of writing diplomatic and non-official letters, described the daily occurrences in a stylish prose and wrote mystical *masnawis* and *ghazals* in Persian.

<sup>2</sup>Jagannath Misra was an eminent Sanskrit poet and scholar. He devoted his *Jagatsimha* to the eulogies of Dara-Shukoh and *Asaf-vilasa* to the praise of Asaf Khan. Shahjahan had given him the title of Pandittraja. After the death of Dara-Shukoh he retired to Mathura and died there. Bikrama Jit Hasrat, *Dara-Shukoh*, Visvabharti, 1953, pp. 214-15.

<sup>3</sup>Kavindracharya Sarasvati of Banaras is well-known for his Sanskrit anthology *Kavindrachandrodaya*. Shahjahan conferred upon him the title of Sarvavidyanidhana. *Dara-Shukoh*, p. 215.

<sup>4</sup>Qanungo, K.R., *Dara-Shukoh*, pp. 34-49.

<sup>5</sup>*Dar tariqa-i Kabir* or a *Kabir Panthi*, *Hasnatu'l-'arifin*, p. 24.



Lal was born in Jahangir's reign in Malwa in Rajasthan and later became the disciple of Chetan Swami, a Vaishnavite Bhakta. Another scholar states he was a Khattri from Qasur, who lived in a hermitage in Dhiyanpur (near Batala),<sup>1</sup> and this would seem the more likely story. Like all wandering yogis and *sannyasis*, Baba Lal travelled extensively; he visited Delhi in about 1649, before finally settling in Dhiyanpur. The disciples he gathered around him were called Baba Lalis and like that *guru*, followed the philosophy of the *Dvaitadvaita-vilakshana-vada* and the *hatha-yogic* practices of Baba Gorakhnath.

Baba Lal held conversations with Dara-Shukoh on seven different occasions, during which he spoke in the Hindi dialect then used by *Sadhus* (holy men) in northern India. Dara-Shukoh may have picked this up from sufi poetry in Hindi. Communication may also have been assisted by Rai Chandrabhan Brahman and Qanungo is quite wrong in his assumption that the conversations were held in Urdu.<sup>2</sup> They consisted mainly of very simple questions and answers which were later published in a number of different versions. Some questions on Hindu mythology and mysticism were omitted in early versions and later included in Chandrabhan's unabridged version of the *Nadiri'n-nikat*.<sup>3</sup>

The simplest version of the conversation includes problems associated with asceticism. Baba Lal informed Dara-Shukoh that the ascetic life began with *fana'* and was then consummated in *baqa'*. Humility was a mystic's crowning glory, and his wisdom rested on his aloofness from other things, and his greatness resided in his recognition of God. God's shadow protected an ascetic who was also constantly absorbed in the service of his *pir*. His solitude was his strength and relaxation. An ascetic valued the food he received without having sought it and considered the acceptance of *madad-i ma'ash* an assault on the foundations of his spiritual life.<sup>4</sup> To an ascetic, the words '*kafir*' (infidel) and *mulhid* (unbeliever) applied only to someone who was ignorant of Reality.<sup>5</sup> Perfect yogis inhaled breath without exhaling.<sup>6</sup> To Baba Lal's mind, ecstasies were not subject to any rule or dress, even though all other human beings were required to cover their private parts; their only concern should be to develop a perception of God.<sup>7</sup>

Although a large number of Dara-Shukoh's questions related to asceticism, he also included a number of more subtle ones on philosophy and creation. These are contained in both the published and manuscript

<sup>1</sup>Wilson, Sketch of the Religious Sects of the Hindus, *Journal Asiatique*, Paris, 1832, p. 296. Pandit Sheo Narain's article in the *Journal of the Panjab historical society*, II, Lahore, pp. 27-28 quoted by Bikrama jit Hasrat, *Dara-Shukoh*, p. 238.

<sup>2</sup>*Dara-Shukoh*, p. 242.

<sup>3</sup>*Dara-Shukoh*, pp. 241-51.

<sup>4</sup>*Sawal wa Jawab-i Shahzada Dara-Shukoh a Baba Lal*, Delhi, 1855, pp. 1-3.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 7.



records. These questions as interpreted by Chandrabhan include the following :

Dara-Shukoh : Is creation from the Creator? Some say creation is through God and God is through creation. As some compare God with the seed, and creation with the tree (which emerges from the seed) how do you explain this?

Baba Lal : Both seeds and trees have a reciprocal relationship to each other and are equally important. And you can use another analogy (which best explains the situation), that of the relationship between a tree and its shadow.

Continuing this theme, Dara-Shukoh asked Baba Lal to explain the relationship between spirit, life and body.

Baba Lal: The spirit is an attribute of the Essence, and life is an attribute of the spirit. Spirit and life are interrelated like waves and the ocean; an isolated wave resembles a cup without water.

Dara-Shukoh then asked Baba Lal why pleasure and pain existed in conjunction in the human condition although (everything) was from the one Essence. Baba Lal explained this by saying there were three different situations in life. Using the analogy of water and wine he said, if a drop of wine was added to a cup of water, the entire contents became like wine. But if a hundred thousand drops of wine were poured into the ocean it remained essentially unchanged. Unlike the ocean if a cup was brimming with water and another drop of water was added, the cup would not be able to retain it; and if some drops of water were taken out of the cup, the quantity of water would be visibly reduced. Similarly a small amount of desire (excluding lust, envy or anger) could enter (a human being), give him pleasure and then be abandoned. Therefore it followed that the nature of the Lord and of the slave differed.<sup>1</sup>

Baba Lal was also asked if he was implying that everything depended on one's own will. The reply was this:

'A wise man is a free agent and he is not (necessarily) slave to his will. God is both jealous (*ghayur*) and forgiving (*ghafur*).'<sup>2</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's questions on Hindu mythology and philosophy and Baba Lal's replies are now available in only a few copies of the *Mukalama* and *Nadiru'n-nikat*. Baba Lal believed that idol worship in Hinduism was designed to help the concentration of the devotee and that it was essential for those who were devoid of inner control. However, the Baba believed it was unnecessary for true spiritualists and he used the analogy of little girls who played with dolls and then abandoned the game when they had children of their own.<sup>3</sup> The belief that

<sup>1</sup>*Sawal wa Jawab-i Shahzada Dara-Shukoh a Baba Lal*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup>*Mukalma*, MS. (Personal collection), f. 10b.



those who died in Kashi attained salvation was not a queer idea, Baba Lal said, for Kashi symbolized *wujud* (Being) and extinction in *wujud* was a means to salvation.<sup>1</sup>

The following classification of spiritual guides made by Baba Lal left an indelible mark on Dara-Shukoh's mind. Firstly, according to Baba Lal there were those who were like gold but could not transform others into gold; secondly there were those who, like an elixir, could change baser metals into gold; thirdly, there were spiritual guides who could be compared to sandalwood, which could change the fragrance of trees of the same family but not of others. These were the guides who could influence only truly talented disciples. Lastly were the perfect guides who, like lamps, could be used to light the wicks of thousands of others.<sup>2</sup>

Baba Lal's ideas, and his personal contacts with Hindu saints, yogis and ascetics strengthened Dara-Shukoh's own belief that the Absolute in the final analysis was one and the same, and merely expressed in different forms in different religions. The idea was not a new one and had previously been developed by Ibn 'Arabi, who had repeatedly drawn attention to the fact that the Absolute perpetually created new self-manifestations in the form of His different attributes.

It seems clear that Dara-Shukoh was not familiar with the *Rushd-nama* of Shaikh 'Abdu'l Quddus Gangohi (1456/1536) which contained a comparison between Nath terminology and the *Dvaidadvaita-vilakshana-vada*, and the terminology of sufism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. He worked independently on the same topic and in 1065/1654-55 wrote the *Majma'u'l-bahrain* (Mingling of the Two Oceans). Compared to the *Rushd-nama*, Dara-Shukoh's book lacks depth and sensitivity and reads dryly, like a list of comparative tables.

In the preface Dara-Shukoh states that he embarked on a quest for the mystic truth of the Hindu *muwahhids* (followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*) after discovering the subtle secrets of sufism. His discussion with Hindu saints had convinced him that, with the exception of verbal differences, the understanding of Reality in the two systems was identical. A detailed comparison had been his aim in the *Majma'u'l-bahrain* as well as the recording of some facts about mystics whose knowledge was indispensable for all the seekers after the truth. Dara-Shukoh implied that an appreciation of the subtleties of *Tasawwuf* in both Islamic sufism and Hindu mysticism was the exclusive domain of the élite of both religions. He claimed his conclusions had emerged from his own intuition and illumination. To silence reproaches from his Muslim enemies, he concluded his introduction with a pointed quote from the celebrated Naqshbandiyya saint, Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar:

<sup>1</sup>*Mukalma*, f. 11b.

<sup>2</sup>*Hasnatu'l-'arifin*, pp. 24-25.



If I know that an infidel, immersed in sin, is singing the note of *Tawhid*, I go to him, hear him, and am grateful to him.<sup>1</sup>

The structure of the chapters in the *Majma'u'l-bahrain* indicates that Dara-Shukoh had isolated what he believed to be the most significant problems of the *Wahdatu'l-Wujud*. Like all adherents of the *Wahdat* Dara saw in the Creator/created relationship a process of determination of the Absolute. The Absolute determined in eternity, known as *Ruh-i A'zam* (Supreme Soul) was in the state of the *Ahadiyya* (the abstract notion of Oneness). To Dara *Ruh-i A'zam* or *Abu'l-Arwah* (Soul of Souls) was identical with *Parmatma*. Another analogy was taken from the inter-relationship between water and waves. The combination of waves in their complete aspect, he believed, could be likened to *Abu'l-Arwah* or *Parmatma*, while 'primeval water' was like the Absolute. To Dara's mind, other Sanskrit equivalents of the Absolute were *Suddha* or *Chetana*.

The followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* believed *Ahadiyya* or Abstract Oneness was 'most indeterminate of all indeterminate states of the Absolute,' that is, the state preceded by what they called the state of Unity in plurality. Being, both in the *Vedanta* and the Nath yogic system, was stripped of all qualities.

'Determination' or 'self-manifestation' of the Absolute, according to Dara-Shukoh took place either in respect of purity or impurity. 'Self-manifestation' of the primal aspect of the Essence was *ruh* (atman or soul), and in its secondary aspect was known as *jasd* (*sarir*) that is, body.<sup>2</sup>

*Parmatma* or *Abu'l-Arwah* was to Dara (as to other followers of *Wahdat al-Wujud*) the Absolute *per se* in its absolute non-manifestation state. Self-manifestation or determination of the Absolute was likened to a silk worm, which, having made threads of silk from itself, becomes entangled in them. It could also be likened to the seed of a tree which produces a plant out of itself, at the same time becoming reabsorbed into its structure.<sup>3</sup> The sole motivation for the determination of Absolute in its self-revealing aspect (God) was contained in the following sufi *Hadis*:

I was a hidden treasure, then I loved to be known, so I brought the creation into existence.

Dara identified '*ishq* (love) with *maya*,<sup>4</sup> a Hindi word meaning 'fascination,' and not with the metaphysical Sanskrit term meaning 'illusion'. The love of *Ruh-i A'zam*, maintained Dara-Shukoh, prompted it to create *Jivatman* (the great soul), which is identical with the *Haqiqat-i Muhammadi*

<sup>1</sup> *Majma'u'l-bahrain*, text with English translation by M. Mahfuz-ul-Haq, Calcutta, 1929; text, pp. 80-81; translation, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, pp. 88/44-45.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, pp. 82-83/42-43.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, pp. 84-85/39.



(the reality of Muhammad). In the terminology of the Hindu *muwahhids*, according to Dara-Shukoh, the latter is called *Hiranya-garbha*<sup>1</sup> or *Avasthatman*. Then came into existence the element ('*unsur*') of wind which Dara-Shukoh equated with the *Nafas-Rahman*<sup>2</sup> (breath of Divine compassion). This wind was within the Being and when it was breathed into Adam, it came out hot, and fire came out of this air. But the same breath was endowed with the qualities of mercy and unity, and it became cold and in this way water was created from fire.<sup>3</sup> Sound, according to Dara-Shukoh, also emanated from the same breath of the Divine compassion which pronounced the word *Kun* (Be) at the time of the creation of the universe.<sup>4</sup>

The determination of the *Ruh-i A'zam* (Necessary Being) or *Parmatma*, Dara-Shukoh went on to say, was featured in the *Kull* (All) or *Brahmand*<sup>5</sup> in the shape of a round globe.<sup>6</sup>

Dara then discussed the sufi concept of spheres, adding that some sufis considered there were four spheres: '*alam-i nasut* (sphere of humanity), '*alam-i malakut* (the invisible angelic sphere), '*alam-i jabarut* (celestial world of Divine Names) and '*alam-i lahut* (sphere of the Godhead). Others, however, distinguished the '*alam-i misal* (world of analogies) from the '*alam-i malakut* and therefore counted five. The Sanskrit equivalents to the four spheres of sufis were *jagrat* (*nasut*), *svapna* (*malakut*), *susupti* (*jabarut*) and *Turiya* (*Lahut*). Dara-Shukoh explained *jagrat* as the world of manifestation and wakefulness, *svapna* as the world of souls and dreams, and *susupti* as the world in which all distinctions of 'I' and 'Thou' were stripped away. He quoted the following lines by Rumi in support of his theory:

If thou desirest to find Him, then do not seek for a moment,  
(And) if thou wishest to know Him, then do not understand for a  
moment.

When thou seekest Him secretly, thou art far from His manifestation,  
And when thou seekest Him openly, thou art hidden from His secrets.

<sup>1</sup>According to the Hindu cosmology the eternal First Cause formed the *Hiranya-garbha* or 'golden womb', a golden cosmic egg which floated upon the surface of the primeval waters. In early Hindu philosophy this egg is often equated with the Cosmic Intelligence or Soul, and in later myth with Brahma. *Hindu World*, I, pp. 252-53.

<sup>2</sup>See Henry Corbin, *Creative imagination in the sufism of Ibn 'Arabi*, pp. 115-16, 120-23, 184-85, 297-300.

<sup>3</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 91/47.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 92/48.

<sup>5</sup>According to Hindu cosmology the *Brahmanda* or 'egg of Brahma' comprised the whole cosmos and contained the twenty-one zones called *loka*, 'locality' arranged in three principal strata known as the *tri-loka*, "three worlds", consisting of paradise, high above the earth, *tala* the subterranean regions, and hell far below the earth. *Hindu World*, I, p. 253.

<sup>6</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 102/64.



And when thou comest out of the hidden and the manifest, so,  
undoubtedly,

Stretch thy legs and sleep comfortably in His protection.

Dara-Shukoh believed the fourth Hindu sphere *Turiya* (Lahut) was identical with Being and encircled and comprehended all the other three worlds. The spiritual journey of humans from the *nasut* to the *malakut*, from the *malakut* to the *jabarut* and from the *jabarut* to *Lahur*, represented an ascent; likewise the Reality of Realities (which Hindus identified with *Avasana*, the Absolute) descended from the *Lahut* to the *jabarut*, from the *jabarut* to the *malakut* and from the *malakut* to *nasut*.<sup>1</sup> To adherents of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, the ascent of man and the descent of the Absolute were a perpetual phenomenon which applied also to Hindu mystics who followed the Unity of Being.

In the school of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Divine names and attributes were ultimately indistinguishable from the Essence. *Jamal* (beauty) and *jadal* (majesty) were described as two of God's main attributes and featured the two aspects of externality which humans could perceive. Dara-Shukoh identified the *triguna* (the three *guna* or attributes in Hindu philosophy), *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*,<sup>2</sup> with the beauty and majesty of God. To him, *sattva* was creation, *rajas* was duration and *tamas* was destruction. Dara-Shukoh identified Brahma with Jibra'il, Visnu with Mika'il and Mahesvara (Siva) with Israfil.<sup>3</sup> All of Dara-Shukoh's explanations were given within the framework of Ibn 'Arabi's theory that the universe was simultaneously the manifestation and creation of God.

To Dara-Shukoh, the Sanskrit equivalents of the Absolute, the Ultimate Principle and the Hidden and Necessary Being were *Asanga*, *Nirguna*, *Nirankar*, *Niranjana*, *Sattva*, *Chit*, etc. Dara-Shukoh identified Allah with the Sanskrit 'Om', *Huwa* (He) with *Sah*, *firishta* (angels) with *divata*,

<sup>1</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 88-89/46-47.

<sup>2</sup>*Guna* in Hindu philosophy is used to indicate the attribute or property of a thing and is of wide application. In Samkhya philosophy the term *guna* refers specially to the three constituent principles of *Prakriti* or primordial substances, namely, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Sattva*, goodness inherent in purity and brightness, is equated with reality and intelligence. It is the power that illumines and reveals all manifestations. It resides in the mind, is white in colour and generates goodness and joy, inspires noble virtues such as faith, forbearance and courage. *Rajas*, 'passion', inherent in energy, force and movement, is the power that activates and excites the other two *gunas*. It resides in life, is red in colour, and produces egoism, selfishness, jealousy and ambition. *Tamas* 'darkness' inherent in mass or matter, is equated with inertia, gloom and stupor. It is illusive and results from *avidya* or ignorance. It is the power that drives to sensual and material desires, and it tends to restrain and suppress. It resides in the body, is black in colour and engenders stupidity, laziness, fear and immorality. *Hindu World*, II, p. 264.

<sup>3</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 88/44.



and the *Mazhar-i Atam* (Perfect Manifestation) with *avatara*. Through *avatara*, according to Dara-Shukoh, *Qudra* (creative power of God) was manifested in such a way as would not have been manifested otherwise.<sup>1</sup>

Of significance also was Dara's interpretation of the 'Light Verse' in the Qur'an:

Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light, Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is Knower of all things.<sup>2</sup>

According to Dara-Shukoh the phrase 'Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth' was equivalent to the Sanskrit '*Jyoti Svarupa*', *Svaprakasa* and *Svapānaprakasa*.<sup>3</sup>

Dara-Shukoh divided the prophets into three categories: (1) those who might have beheld God with the outer or the inner eyes, (2) those who might have heard the voice of God, either the sound only or sound composed of words, (3) those who might have seen the angels or heard their voices. A further basis of division of the prophets and saints, according to Dara-Shukoh, was the following:

1. Prophets such as Noah who recognised in God only the aspect of *tanzih* (absolute transcendence) and were unable to gain a large following, resulting in the destruction of all. In his own days, according to Dara-Shukoh, there were some sufis who urged that their disciples should recognise only the *tanzih* aspect of God. They too were unable to make their disciples gnostics and ruined their spiritual life. Dara's remark is obviously aimed at the followers of the Mujaddid.
2. Prophets such as Moses who saw God Himself in the fire of the tree and heard Divine words from the clouds. He emphasized the aspect of *tashbih* (comparison or immanence) in God, which made a large number of his followers anthropomorphists and worshippers of a golden calf. Many pseudo-sufis of his own time, Dara-Shukoh asserted, were engrossed by handsome and attractive faces and wasted their time in frivolities.
3. Prophethood that combined *tanzih* with *tashbih*, such as that of the Prophet Muhammad who harmoniously blended the Absolute and the determined, the Colourless and the coloured, the Near and the distant, was the comprehensive prophethood. The Qur'an also

<sup>1</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 99/53.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, XXIV, 35.

<sup>3</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 93-94/49-50.



combined two aspects of God: 'Naught is as His likeness; and He is the Hearer, the Seer.'<sup>1</sup> Only such saints as the followers of the Prophet Muhammad who combined the *tashbih* with *tanzih* were perfect according to Dara-Shukoh. He included in this category the first four Caliphs, Hasan and Husain, a number of the Prophet Muhammad's leading companions and a host of sufis. The list concluded with Shah (Miyan-Mir), Miyan-Bari, Mulla-Shah, Shah Muhammad Dilruba and Shaikh Taiyib Sirhindi. The only Hindu name mentioned was that of Baba Lal Bairagi; curiously enough even Kabir was ignored.<sup>2</sup>

The sufi theory of the vision of God on earth rejected the views of the Mu'tazila and Shi'is who denied that people were able to see God, even in paradise. Dara-Shukoh saw no contradiction between the sufi concept of the vision of the Divine and the theory of His being Absolute, Essence, Ultimate Principle and Unknowable; and he explained the lack of contradiction by reminding his readers that God, being Omnipotent, was potent enough to manifest Himself in any manner, anywhere and at any time. According to Dara-Shukoh the following verse from the Qur'an stated this truth:

Whoso is blind here will be blind in the Hereafter, and yet further from the road.<sup>3</sup>

To Dara-Shukoh the equivalent of the Vision of God to Hindu followers of the Unity of Being was *Saksatkar*, which was confirmed by the Vedas.<sup>4</sup> The *Mahapralaya* of the Hindu mystics and the *Qiyamat* (Resurrection) of the Muslims suggested to Dara-Shukoh that, after the completion of the age of Brahmand, the occupants of Heaven and Hell would achieve Hindu concept of *mukti* (release), that is both would be annihilated and effaced into the Absolute:

Everyone that is thereon will pass away:

There remaineth but the countenance of thy Lord of Might and Glory.<sup>5</sup>

The *Majma'u'l-bahrain* had always been considered an important work and it was singled out by the 'ulama' as a justification for condemning Dara-Shukoh to death. They accused him of calling infidelity and Islam 'twin-brothers'.<sup>6</sup> In fact, however, the work itself lies strictly within the ideological framework of Ibn 'Arabi's teachings and asserts that the stage of universality and perfection was reserved for the Prophet

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, XLII, 11.

<sup>2</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 101/56-57.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, XVII, 72.

<sup>4</sup>*Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 96-97/50-52.

<sup>5</sup>*Qur'an*, LV, 26-27.

<sup>6</sup>Abu'l Fazl Ma'muri, continuation of Sadiq Khan's *Tarikh-i Shahjahani*, British Museum MS. Or 1617, f. 96b.



Muhammad, and that *tanzih* was harmoniously blended with *tashbih* only by his successors and the Muslim sufis, to whom alone were addressed the following words in the Qur'an:

Ye are the best community that hath been raised up for mankind.<sup>1</sup>

Dara-Shukoh's unquenchable thirst for *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) failed to be satisfied with available Persian translations of the Sanskrit classics. He turned towards the revelatory literature of other religions, such as Christianity and Judaism. He perused the Book of Moses, the Gospels and the Psalms to find that these scriptures referred to the *Tawhid* allegorically and enigmatically. His study of the Qur'an convinced him that the prophets had been sent by God to India to spread Divine revelation.

Although such of his predecessors as Shaikh Ruknu'd-Din (the son of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus) had argued with the support of Qur'anic verses that the ancient Indians had been the recipients of Divine revelation in pre-Muhammad days, Dara-Shukoh made a point of asserting that the *Rigveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Samaveda* and the *Atharvaveda* were the Divinely revealed Books. He believed they had been revealed to the ancient Indian prophets, the greatest of whom was Brahma or Adam. The mystical secrets, devotional exercises and *Tawhid* described in the *Vedas* were contained in the *Upnikhats* (*Upanishads*). In ancient times philosophers separated the *Upanishads* into different parts and wrote commentaries on them, and, according to Dara, the study of the *Upanishads* had always been regarded as the highest form of worship.

The discovery of these revealed works prompted Dara-Shukoh to translate the *Upanishads* into Persian in order to unearth details of the *Tawhid* hidden in them, and not as a linguistic exercise. He invited *pandits* and *sannyasis* from the holy city of Banaras (then under his governorship) to Delhi and completed the work within six months on 26 Ramazan 1067/8 July 1657.

Study of the *Upanishads* managed to satisfy Dara-Shukoh's curiosity in a way all other works had failed to do. To him they were the fountain-head of the ocean of *Tawhid* and were correlated with the Qur'an even to the extent of its being a commentary on them. He believed the truth of the *Upanishads* was echoed in these lines in the Qur'an:

That (this) is indeed a noble Qur'an

In a Book kept hidden

Which none toucheth save the purified,

A revelation from the Lord of the Worlds.<sup>2</sup>

Dara argued that these verses did not refer to the Psalms, the Book of Moses or the Gospels; and that the reference to 'revelation' (*tanzil*) was

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, III, 110; *Majma'u'l-bahrain*, pp. 101/56.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, LVI, 77-80.



not to the Preserved Tablet (*Lauh-i Mahfuz*);<sup>1</sup> and that the 'Book kept hidden' (*Kitabin Maknun*) refers to the *Upanishads*. He accused Hindu pandits and scholars of concealing the *Upanishads* from Muslims in an attempt to hide the subtle points of the *Tawhid* they contained and also to keep them from a large number of Hindus themselves, who were unaware of the mystical philosophy of the *Upanishads*. Therefore his own translation, Dara-Shukoh believed, would open new doors to mystics interested in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, Hindu and Muslim alike. However, Dara struck an orthodox note in maintaining that his translation was to elucidate the Qur'an, not to diminish its significance, and that even before commencing the work, an augury had been taken from the pages of the Qur'an. The following verses of the Qur'an prompted Dara-Shukoh to commence the work :

Alif,<sup>2</sup> Lam, Mim, Sad<sup>3</sup>

(It is) a Scripture that is revealed unto thee  
(Muhammad)—so let there be no heaviness in thy  
heart therefrom—that thou mayest warn thereby, and  
(it is) a Reminder unto believers.<sup>4</sup>

Dara was himself not destined to see the use of his translation by his contemporaries, but the fact that a large number of manuscript copies of it are available in libraries and private collections of both Hindus and Muslims in India today would suggest that interest in his Persian translation has never waned. Not only a monument to Dara-Shukoh's great eclectic spirit, the translation also aroused interest as far away as Europe. During the reign of Nawwab Shuja'ud-Dawla (1754-75) of Awadh, the French Resident, Monsieur Gentil, sent a copy of Dara-Shukoh's translation to Anquetil Duperron, a French scholar in Paris who was a keen student of ancient religions. Anquetil Duperron translated the work into both French and Latin. The Latin version was published in 1801-2 but the French one failed to see the light of day. The German philosopher Schopenhauer, after reading the Latin version, went to the extent of saying:

In the whole world there is no study, except that of the originals, so beneficial and so elevating as that of the *Oupnekhat* (*Upanishads*). It has been the solace of my life; it will be the solace of my death.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The preserved tablets on which according to Muslim belief, the affairs of mankind have been written by God from all eternity.

<sup>2</sup>Many chapters of the *Qur'an* begin with three letters of the Arabic alphabet to which great mystical significance in the commentaries is assigned.

<sup>3</sup>*Qur'an*, VII, 1-2.

<sup>4</sup>*Sirr-i Akbar* edited by Tara Chand and S.M. Reza Jalali Na'ini, Tehran, 1957, pp. 1-6 (Persian numbers).

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 43 from Tara Chand's English introduction.



*The Sufi attitude to proselytization*

Although the main incentives for conversion to Islam as stated by Ja'far Makki in the fifteenth century could also be applied to the Mughal period, the process of proselytization from the sixteenth century onwards became an increasingly complex phenomenon. Its main aspects were fear of death, fear of enslavement of the family, economic incentives (rewards, pensions and war booty) the superstitious bigotry of the ancestral faith of the converts and, lastly, persuasive preaching.<sup>1</sup>

Akbar admitted having forcibly made converts early in his life,<sup>2</sup> but in March 1562 his decree to abolish the enslavement of the families of captives finally<sup>3</sup> stemmed the tide of forcible conversions to Islam; and this was later further reinforced by remission of the pilgrims' tax<sup>4</sup> and the abolition of *jizya*.<sup>5</sup> The abolition of restrictions on the building of temples,<sup>6</sup> prohibition of cow slaughter<sup>7</sup> and permission for Muslims who had been forcibly converted to Islam to return to their former faith<sup>8</sup> finally reduced forcible conversion during Akbar's reign to a sheer impossibility.

Early in 1612 Jahangir reinforced his father's decrees by further legislation in which the Islamicization of unwilling Hindus was specifically outlawed.<sup>9</sup> From the time of Akbar, the Mughal public services were open to the adherents of all religions, to members of all castes and racial groups. No substantial change occurred in the policy of recruitment to the higher echelons of *mansabdars* even in Aurangzib's reign. In the early years of his reign Shahjahan encouraged non-Muslims to embrace Islam, and Hindu prisoners-of-war who became converted were given favourable treatment.<sup>10</sup> Shahjahan ordered Mulla Muhibib 'Ali Sindi, an '*alim*, poet and sufi whom he deeply respected, to convert willing Hindus to Islam which would make them eligible for stipends and revenue grants.<sup>11</sup>

A reversal of Akbar's liberal policy occurred during Aurangzib's reign. The new repressive, discriminatory laws included re-imposition of the pilgrimage tax and *jizya*, restrictions on the celebration of Holi,

<sup>1</sup>Ja'far Makki, *Bahru'l-ma'ani*, India Office MS., no. 1545 Letter no. 28 dated 23 Zu'l-hijja 824/19 December, 1421.

<sup>2</sup>*A'in-i Akbari*, III, p. 181, Akbar's sayings, no. 181.

<sup>3</sup>*Akbar-nama*, II, p. 159.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, II, p. 190.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, II, p. 204.

<sup>6</sup>DuJarric's account translated by C.H. Payne, *Akbar and the Jesuits*, London, 1926, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup>*Muntakhabu't-tawarikh*, II, pp. 261, 303.

<sup>8</sup>*ibid*, II, p. 358.

<sup>9</sup>*Tuzuk-i Jahangiri*, p. 100.

<sup>10</sup>Abdu'l-Hamid Lahauri, *Padshah-nama*, I, Calcutta, 1866-72, p. 58. Muhammad Salih Kanboh Lahauri, *Amal-i Salih*, I, Calcutta, 1912, p. 612.

<sup>11</sup>*Tabaqat-i Shahjahani*, f. 316b.



payment of heavy custom duties by Hindu merchants, and restrictions against the recruitment of Hindus in the revenue department. The Emperor encouraged war-prisoners to be converted; and leading Hindu *zamindars* obtained considerable financial relief and positions in the Court upon their conversion.

Sri Ram Sharma has laboriously compiled from the records a list of converts during the reigns of Aurangzib, even including the court news bulletins (*akhbarat*), but the total number of these converts is less than two thousand. He rightly points out that:

The wonder is not that so many were converted but that the vast majority of Hindus kept their faith amidst so many temptations and such persecution.<sup>1</sup>

It would therefore seem that political fear and economic incentives during the reigns of Shahjahan and Aurangzib had little effect either way on Islamic proselytization. Nevertheless between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries conversions of Hindus to Islam did occur on a considerable scale, due to the successful proselytizing techniques used by the new sufic orders and because of social factors inherent in the fresh wave of urbanization then taking place.

We know that the Suhrawardiyya, Shaikh Jalalu'd-Din Tabrizi,<sup>2</sup> Makhdum Jahaniyan<sup>3</sup> and his brother, Raju Qattal,<sup>4</sup> were active propagators of Islam. The sufis trained in the *khanqahs* of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani, Mir Saiyid 'Ali Hamadani and his son and successors, Mir Muhammad, considered the conversion of Hindus to Islam as one of their main objectives.<sup>5</sup> Shaikh Jalal of Sylhet and his Turkistani disciples<sup>6</sup> were similarly imbued with missionary fervour, as were Khwajgan and the Naqshbandiyyas of Central Asia, some of whom would devote a few years of their lives fighting against the non-Islamic Turkic tribes before converting them to Islam. The sufis of the Shattariyya, Qadiriyya and the Naqshbandiyya orders who began establishing their *khanqahs* during the fifteenth century were deeply aware of the proselytizing traditions of their ancestors in Persia and Central Asia, and brought their knowledge to bear upon Indian conditions in order to gain converts.

We have already described how the Shattariyya, Shaikh 'Abdu'llah, marched in military fashion from Central Asia to Bengal accompanied by a band of disciples dressed as soldiers. The local Shattariyya *khanqahs* which he established from Bengal to Malwa, and the later ones begun by his disciples as far away as Gujarat, were quite unlike the pacific Chishti centres. Active proselytizers, these Shattariyyas also mastered yoga,

<sup>1</sup>Sri Ram Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, second edition Bombay, 1962, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup>*HSI*, pp. 201-2.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 280.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 279.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 292-98.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, pp. 314-15.



devoting several years of their lives to the practice of hard ascetic exercises in the wilderness. The fame of their ability to perform miracles and supernatural feats helped them to convert disciples both among Hindus, and among Muslim adherents to other sufi orders. It would seem that in Bengal they reinforced the activities of the descendants of Shaikh Jalal's disciples. Not only did they convert many animists, Buddhists and Hindus in Bengal, but their activities extended from there to Sumatra and Java, transforming these regions into important Shattariyya centres.

Similarly, the Qadiriyyas were also popular among local people on account of their ability to perform miracles, and they succeeded the Suhrawardiyyas in the Sind and Panjab. Bada'uni's claim that Shaikh Dawud of Chati converted fifty to a hundred Hindus each day would make the number of converts annually an impossible neat 15,000.<sup>1</sup> However the fact remains that this famous Qadiriyya *khanqah* remained a significant centre of proselytization for more than two centuries. Despite Akbar's prohibition against enforced conversion, Shaikh Dawud's successor, Shah Abu'l-Ma'ali, and sufis in other Qadiriyya *khanqahs* certainly never hesitated in their proselytizing mission and, as previously mentioned, even Mulla-Shah converted a number of Hindus to Islam.<sup>2</sup>

The Qadiriyyas combined the role of 'alim with that of mystic. Diwan Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rashid's *Rashidiyya* was mainly designed to equip Sunnis with the theological background to fight Shi'i propaganda, but there would have been no hesitation in using it to challenge Hindu understanding of the Absolute and to convert Hindus to Islam. The *Rashidiyya khanqahs* of the Qadiriyyas between Jaunpur and Bihar, in areas sparsely populated by Muslims, would probably have been more actively engaged in proselytization. The story of Shaikh Husain Rasul Numa's refusal to convert an important Hindu, told earlier,<sup>3</sup> was indeed a rare occurrence among Qadiriyyas and is more reminiscent of the humble, ascetic approach of a Chishti sufi.

Diwan 'Abdu'r-Rashid's disciples and descendants also established *khanqahs* throughout Bengal. Again, the support given to the Qadiriyya *khanqah* of Shaikh Ni'matu'llah Qadiri and his successors by Prince Shah Shuja', and later by Aurangzib, helped to politicize their proselytizing activities and may also have been responsible for strengthening Sunni orthodoxy among the syncretic Shattariyyas and the Madariyyas, as well as converting Hindus to Islam.

The Naqshbandiyya *khanqah* of Khwaja Khawand Mahmud in Kashmir was another centre of Muslim conversions, and from there disciples were sent into the field as far away as Tibet.<sup>4</sup> The Mujaddid

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, p. 63.

<sup>3</sup>*supra*, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup>*supra*, pp. 119-20.

<sup>4</sup>*supra*, p. 183-84.



would hardly have been able to attract Hindus to his *khanqah*; nevertheless Shaikh Badru'd-Din Sirhindi, describing the miracles of his *pir*, says that despite the comparative weakness of Islam at the time, and the domination of infidelity, thousands of *kafirs* (*hazaran hazar kuffar*) accepted Islam under the Mujaddid.<sup>1</sup> Although we may not accept Shaikh Badru'd-Din's claims, there can be no doubt that the Mujaddidis would not have lost an opportunity to convert Hindus to Islam and some of his *khalifas* and their successors who were unable to compete with other sufis in mystic fields, would probably not have hesitated to offer hopes of salvation and other less significant favours in this world and hereafter in the name of the alleged influence of their *pirs*.

Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz himself claimed to have converted hundreds of Hindus, but was not successful in recruiting more than half a dozen Shi'is to the ranks of Sunnism.<sup>2</sup> Like his father, Shah Waliu'llah, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz was an *'alim* as well as a sufi. He was endowed with the gift of wit which he used to befuddle and silence his opponents in debate. His wit and humour were incorporated into his preaching at the village level and among the poorer groups in the towns. This story illustrates his approach. When asked by a Hindu cart-driver whether God was a Hindu or a Muslim, the Shah replied by indirectly implying that God was for the Muslims, if not Himself a Muslim, for said the Shah, if He had been a Hindu the killing of cows would not have occurred.<sup>3</sup>

The lead taken by Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz in participating in debates with both Christian missionaries and Shi'is was enthusiastically followed by his successors who not only jousting verbally with Christian missionaries, but also fought polemical battles against the Shi'is and other Sunni sects. At the end of the nineteenth century, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi (1828-1905), one of the founders of the famous Deoband seminary, took a leading part in disputes against Christian missionaries as well as against Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), the founder of the Arya Samaj, Shi'is, and Ghulam Ahmad Qadiyani.

From Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti to Shaikh Nasiru'd-Din Chiragh-i Dihli, the early Chishtiyyas played no role in propagation of the faith. To Shaikh Nizamud-Din 'Auliya', it was the company of pious men and not their preaching which made an impact on Hindus.<sup>4</sup> He himself was far too modest to count himself among those whose impact could revolutionize the Hindu mind. The image of the early Chishtiyyas in spurious *mal'fuzats* of the fourteenth century is, however, somewhat different, and they are depicted as getting the better of Hindu yogis in

<sup>1</sup>*Hazaratu'l-quds*, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup>*Mal'fuzat-i Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz*, p. 22

<sup>3</sup>Zahiru'd-Din, Sayyid Ahmad ed., *Kamalat-i 'Azizi*, Karachi, 1973, pp. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup>*HSI*, pp. 166-67.



performing miracles and in converting them to Islam. This literature shows a deep enthusiasm for proselytization. The most noticeable change in the Chishtiyya attitude, however, took place mainly under the influence of the disciples of Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Daula Simnani. Saiyid Muhammad Gisu-Daraz, whose *khanqah* dervishes from Simnan visited, claims to have indulged in polemics with Brahmans after both sides had taken a solemn vow that the defeated leader would embrace the faith of the victor. Saiyid Gisu-Daraz asserts that his knowledge of Hindu classical works enabled him to beat the Brahmans at their own game, but that the latter did not honour their promise.<sup>1</sup> Thus the Saiyid does not seem to have succeeded in converting any Brahmans.

The *Mir'atu'l-asrar* gives the following account of the Islamicization of a village near Rudauli, the home of Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq and his successors. Once Shaikh Ahmad 'Abdu'l-Haqq happened to pass through the Hindu village of Bahala near Rudauli. There the Shaikh called *azan*, which made the Hindus so furious that they rose against the Shaikh. Didi Rani, who ruled the village after the death of her husband, was a wise woman. She visited the Shaikh and said that as he had called *azan* there, he should predict her and her sons' future. The Shaikh said that he had given her the villages of Kora and Tahlora; and that there she and her sons would never be taken captive. She thereupon moved to those villages. Some time later Sultan Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpur assigned Bahraila to an officer called Azhdar Khan Badakhshi who rehabilitated the village and Islamicized the Hindus, but the Rani and her descendants never encountered any problem.<sup>2</sup> Although the story does not suggest any proselytization by the Shaikh himself, and even shows how he unconditionally blessed a Hindu Rani, it does indicate the miraculous power of the Shaikh to prophesy the Islamicization of a Hindu village. There is also no real evidence to suggest that Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi ever converted anyone to Islam, but he was pleased to encourage a Hindu convert to be steadfast in the new faith, considering it to be a divine grace bestowed.<sup>3</sup>

The *Jawahir-i Faridi* (completed in 1033/1623) credits Baba Farid with converting a number of Hindu tribes of the Ajodhan region.<sup>4</sup> This legend was naturally fostered in order to enhance the prestige of these newly Islamicized tribes. However, one may certainly assume that from the fourteenth century on lay members of the Chishtiyya order began to take some interest in proselytization.

Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman was an enthusiastic propagator of the superi-

<sup>1</sup>HSI, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>*Mir'atu'l-asrar*, ff. 471b-472a.

<sup>3</sup>'Abdu'l-Quddus Gangohi, *Maktubat-i Quddusiyya*, Delhi, 1871, pp. 34-35.

<sup>4</sup>Ali Asghar, *Jawahir-i Faridi*, Lahore, 1301/1884.



ority of the Chishtiyyas over other sufi orders, but it is not known if he used his mastery of Sanskrit and Hindu mythology to convert any Hindus to Islam. Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi did, however, encourage his *khalifa*, Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din, to convert Hindus to Islam, writing to him that he should live peacefully side by side with both Hindus and Muslims, teaching them *zikr* and meditation, particularly the former which especially attracted Hindus.<sup>1</sup> Shah Kalimu'llah did not insist that Hindus become converted before being instructed in *zikr*.

The Shah divided the stabilization of converts into two stages. In the beginning, they were required incessantly to recite the *durud* (imploring mercy for the Prophet Muhammad) and study mystical and historical texts such as the *Nafhatu'l-uns*, *Tazkiratu'l-auliya'*, *Lam'at*, *Sharh-i Lam'at*, *Lawa'ih* and its commentary.<sup>2</sup> The new converts were advised to hide their new status initially, and reveal it only gradually so that in the event of sudden death relatives would not cremate them.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikh Nazamu'd-Din's son, Shah Fakhru'd-Din, continued both Shah Kalimu'llah's and his own father's techniques of proselytization. He also urged disciples that instruction in the names of Allah should not be postponed until after Islamicization, as the name itself was dynamic and attracted people to Allah.<sup>4</sup> As the reader may remember, the breath control exercises of the Chishti *zikr* had been borrowed from yogic breath control (*habs-i nafs*), a point openly acknowledged by Shah Kalimu'llah Jahanabadi. To Hindus, the Chishti *zikr* implied only the substitution of Allah for Om or for other Hindu mystical syllables.

Although leading *khanqahs* of various sufi *silsilas* which operated in the main urban centres were not significant in proselytization, sufis in small towns and villages did make an important contribution in this direction. Large towns were also administrative and military centres where high officials of different categories lived in a stage of dependence on Hindu bankers and money-lenders. The urban working classes were largely Muslims serving in *karkhanas* and as domestic labourers and slaves to the same privileged classes, and in the *khanqahs*. Generally those in contact with *khanqahs* who desired assistance with their spiritual and worldly problems were already Muslims. Of the Hindus who called on Chishtiyya *khanqahs* for training in *zikr*, the most likely to convert were the educated Hindus of the *Kayastha* class whose knowledge of sufism was already extensive and whose previous study of the works of Sa'di, 'Attar and Rumi had filled them with enthusiasm for sufi ideals.

However, the situation in small towns and villages founded and governed by Muslim *zamindars* and holders of *madad-i ma'ash* grants was a different matter. Artisans and cultivators were encouraged to settle

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat-i Kalimi*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 25.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>4</sup>*Fakhru't-talibin*, p. 86.



there because of the influence of the sufis and the *zamindars* who had founded such places. The mystics and *mullas* who lived in these villages enjoyed a large degree of power in local politics. As religious leaders of small groups of Islamic town and village communities, they were more exposed to contacts with Hindus who might seek their help both for redress against the high-handedness of local *zamindars* and government officials. Some Hindus wished to invoke the alleged mystical and magical powers of sufis for the treatment of incurable diseases and to rid their homes and villages of demons and devils. Such problems were the concern of even such prestigious *khanqahs* as that of Baba Farid at Ajodhan.<sup>1</sup> The cure of diseases through contact with amulets and sufi relics had not been discouraged by even the Baba or Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya.<sup>2</sup> The village sufis were therefore correctly seen by both Hindus and animists to be as significant figures as those who had discovered in themselves some form of cosmic power. They might not have hesitated to convert their protégés to Islam. Both Hindus and animists believed in the magical power of names, and Shattariyya training in the use of divine epithets to help control spiritual and cosmic power encouraged the Islamicization of Bengalis. Some robbers and bandits who at some stage in their careers had felt twinges of remorse would approach sufis to help them re-settle into society after first being pardoned by the government. Islamicization under a Muslim political system was the only means of blotting out a bad record and of starting a new career. Many others outside the pale of society and their dependents were no doubt encouraged to follow this example. Instances of conversion of tribes following the Islamicization of their leaders was a common occurrence in Medieval Indian history. The orthodox Islamic society of India relegated the *ra'iyat* (ryot or peasant) to the position of livestock in an agricultural economy, that is, they were protected and cared for physically because they were an economic asset, but were otherwise completely discounted as human beings.<sup>3</sup> Sufis who lived in large towns drawing income from villages were naturally not too concerned with converting Hindu ryots. For example, Shah Waliu'llah advised Indian Muslims to live so far from Hindu towns that they would be unable to see the light from the fires in Hindu houses.<sup>4</sup> This means that the Shah's followers could have converted the townsfolk only.

However it was the *baraka* (blessings) from the tombs of famous sufis which attracted even larger groups of Muslims and Hindus than the *khanqahs* of mystics during their own lifetime. This applied equally to large towns, but in villages and smaller towns there was a growth in the

<sup>1</sup>HSI, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 142, 220-21.

<sup>3</sup>Shah Waliu'llah, *Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, I, Karachi, n. d., pp. 257-58.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, II, p. 468.



number of graves of prominent Muslims killed in war; believed to be martyrs, and these also became centres of local worship. In the wake of ever-increasing legends surrounding the martyrdom of Saiyid Salar Mas'ud Ghazi,<sup>1</sup> the number of stories which grew up about alleged martyrs buried in various villages became astronomically large. The same form of prostration at the graves of martyrs and sufis was used by both Hindus and Muslims. At the village level many Hindus who believed their difficulties would be solved by the spirits of those whom the graves commemorated may have later embraced Islam under the guidance of local sufis in fulfilment of vows.

Itinerant dervishes and qalandars whose abilities to perform miracles created awesome scenes even in the most prominent *khanqahs*, were naturally extremely attractive figures to simple villagers and town-dwellers. It is obvious that they also must have converted Hindus after first having made a tremendous impact through their apparent supernatural powers.

Naturally the Islam of such converts was as syncretic as it was with the majority in general, and the graves of saints and martyrs remained more meaningful for the spiritual lives of village Muslims than the puritanical details of the *Shari'a*. The impact of the puritanical Sunni revivalist movements of the Makhdum Jahaniyan, the Mujaddid and Saiyid Ahmad Shahid was a slow process and real changes occurred in towns alone which were also influenced by a multitude of factors in addition to the efforts of the leaders of these revivalist movements.

<sup>1</sup>*HSI*, pp. 311-17.



## Chapter Nine

### Sufi Poets of the Regional Languages of the Subcontinent

THE sufi movement in India was influenced from its very inception by the poetry of Persian sufi poets such as Sana'i (d. 525/1130-31), Nizami (d. 605/1209), 'Attar (d. 617/1220), Rumi (d. 672/1273) and Sa'di (d. 691/1292). The thoughts contained in their poetry continued to inspire sufis of all generations. However, the seed of sufi poetry in the regional languages of India, sown by Baba Farid and Shaikh Hamidu'd-Din Nagauri, also flourished and bore fruit. Indian sufis wrote not only *ghazals*<sup>1</sup> and *masnawis*<sup>2</sup> in regional languages but also composed *dohas*<sup>3</sup> and *sakhis*.<sup>4</sup> From the sixteenth century onwards they came to be deeply influenced by Kabir, Surdas and Guru Nanak. We have already discussed in the first volume the impact of both Kabir and Nanak, but the impact of Surdas (AD 1483/1563) on the sufi mind was also of considerable significance. The orthodox Muslims regarded the poetry based on the Radha-Krishna lyrics of Surdas as blasphemous but to the sufis of the school of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Wahid Bilgarami, it was a symbolic reference to divine love and Reality. The *Bishunpad*,<sup>5</sup> comprising verses of both Kabir and Surdas, were popular in all *sama'* gatherings and efforts were made to refine the music accompanying their verses. Some orthodox Muslims condemned poets such as Saiyid Ibrahim, called Ras Khan (AD 1573/1618), who wrote immortal verses on the Krishna cult. They considered the poet an apostate. There were, however, a considerable number of sufis whose prestige in their own *silsila* could not be undermined because of their interest in the poetry of the regional languages and their love for the symbols, similes and metaphors drawn from Hindu mythology and the Indian environment.

The Hindi sufi *masnawis* of Shaikh Rizqu'llah Rajan Mushtaqi Shattari,

<sup>1</sup>Elegy of love consisting of some five to twelve distichs or verses.

<sup>2</sup>Narrative poems composed of distichs corresponding in measure describing some connecting theme.

<sup>3</sup>Couplets or distichs.

<sup>4</sup>Literally witness but pithy sayings of the holy men who were believed to have a true perception of the Ultimate Reality.

<sup>5</sup>HSI, pp. 359-60; *supra*, p. 276.



the uncle of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, do not survive, but the *Madhu-malati* of Shah Manjhan Shattari has left an indelible mark both on Hindi poetry and the sufi traditions. Shah Manjhan was the son of 'Abdu'llah Qazi Khairu'd-Din Sharif and a grandson of Qazi Tajud-Din Nahwai.<sup>1</sup> The Qazi's *khanqah* in Balkh was very famous, but he migrated to India during the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur (804/1401-844/1440). Although at that time Jaunpur was at the peak of its glory, and the sultan was offering liberal patronage to scholars, sufis and talented foreigners, Qazi Tajud-Din Nahwi decided to settle at Lakhnauti in Bengal. The seminary which he founded there soon rose to prominence and many able scholars studied there. Manjhan's father, 'Abdullah Qazi, was married to the daughter of Qazi Sama'u'd-Din of Delhi, a high dignitary of the Delhi sultans who had awarded him the title of Qutlugh Khan.

Manjhan was born in 921/1515-16 and was educated in his grandfather's seminary, but it was the training of Tajud-Din 'Urafa Saiyid Tajud-Din of Bukhara that made Manjhan both an *'alim* and a sufi. Leaving his native land Bukhara, Saiyid Tajud-Din had travelled through many Islamic countries. In India, he became the disciple of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and also introduced Shah Manjhan to his spiritual guide. Manjhan studied the *Jawhar-i-Khamsa* under the direction of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus and so deeply impressed the Shaikh with his clear perception of it that the Shaikh awarded Manjhan the same *khirqah* which he himself used to wear during his long ascetic exercises in the Chunar hills and forests.

After conquering Raisen in 1543, Sher Shah (945/1538-952/1545) induced Manjhan to migrate to Raisen and to assume the post of Shaikhul-Islam (director of the religious activities of Muslims). Accepting Sher Shah's offer, Manjhan built his own *khanqah* there, but in 1553 the Rajputs reconquered Raisen and Shah Manjhan migrated to Sarangpur. It would seem that during the political upheaval in Raisen his library was also destroyed, but Manjhan compiled abstracts of all the important works from memory. A large number of scholars began to attend his Sarangpur seminary and *khanqah* and the town began to vie with Shiraz as a prominent centre of learning.

During Akbar's visit to Malwa in 986/1578, Shah Manjhan, along with other *'alims*, also called on the Emperor. It was on this occasion that Ghausi Shattari sat at Shah Manjhan's feet and became his life-long admirer.

In his old age, Shah Manjhan bade farewell to his family and retired to a lonely hermitage at Ashta, about fifteen miles from Sarangpur. A few years later he again shifted to Sarangpur and began to lead a retired life given to meditation and ascetic exercises. Before his death, he organized

<sup>1</sup>Expert of Arabic grammar.



a party of *zikh-ijahr* and died shortly afterwards in 1001/1592-93.<sup>1</sup>

In 952/1545, Shah Manjhan compiled the *Madhu-malati* at Raisen, and like many medieval poets wrote a short panegyric on Islam Shah Sur (952/1545-960/1552), extolling his intrepidity and liberality. However, he waxes most eloquent when describing the saintly eminence, the ascetic exercises and the spiritual influence of his *pir*.<sup>2</sup>

The story of the *Madhu-malati* itself is a traditional Indian fairytale, built around the romance of Prince Manohar, of an imaginary town, Kannaigiri-Garh, and the princess of Maharasnagar, Madhu-malati. Like the princes of so many similar stories, Manohar was born to his parents twelve years after their marriage through the prayers of a recluse. One night when Manohar was fourteen years and eleven months old, some fairies, impressed by his beauty, took away his bed to the room of the Madhu-malati in order to compare their respective comeliness. Then they left the two beds in the room and went away to a mango garden. When Manohar awoke in the night, he was astonished to find himself beside such a serene beauty. However, it took no time for him to recall from a past life that they were destined to be lovers. Meanwhile, Madhu-malati awoke and was filled with a similar reaction to that of Manohar. Both swore to remain inseparable from each other for the rest of their lives. Then they went to sleep. Before dawn, the fairies transferred Manohar's bed to his own chamber.

In the morning, Manohar decided to leave his home in search of Madhu-malati. No wise counsel, no bewailing or crying on the part of his parents could alter Manohar's determination. Like all lovers in traditional Indian romances he became a yogi, but his parents ordered an army of soldiers to accompany their dear son. Travelling through jungles, they reached the coast and then journeyed in boats for four months. When the boats were finally wrecked in a whirlpool, the Prince managed to reach the shore, which was covered by a dense jungle. There in the thick forest, he found another beauty, on a bed, who introduced herself as Pema, the daughter of the raja of Chitwisrao-Nagar, and who had been brought there by a demon. Learning of the adventures of Manohar, Pema told him that Madhu-malati was her bosom friend and that before the demon had seized her a year ago, she and Madhu-malati had met each other daily. Manohar was deeply excited by this news and after killing the demon, both he and Pema reached her house in Chitwisrao-Nagar. Pema's parents welcomed Manohar warmly. Next day, when from her neighbouring town Madhu-malati called on her friend, Pema introduced her to the Prince. The two were filled with

<sup>1</sup>*Gulzar-i ahrar*, Manchester MS., ff. 238b-239b.

<sup>2</sup>Matprasad Gupta ed., *Madhumalti*, Allahabad, 1961, pp. 14-22,



infinite joy and, swearing to refrain from sexual intercourse until they were formally married, both went to sleep together.

Alarmed by Madhu-malati's delay in returning home, her mother, Rupmanjari, went to make enquiries at Pema's house. There she was shocked to see Madhu-malati sleeping with the Prince. Naturally she burst into a rage at Pema but the latter, recounting the story of their love in a previous life, assured her that no evil intentions had ever entered the minds of any of them. However, Rupmanjari brought Madhu-malati home and managed to send the Prince back to his palace in Kannaigiri-Garh. Madhu was unable to bear the separation but her mother, who considered their wedding a family scandal, magically transformed Madhu-malati into a bird. The bird Madhu flew away in search of her lover but fell into the net of a prince, Tarachand, who was so moved by the tragic story of Madhu-malati that he took her home and persuaded her mother to change Madhu into a girl again. Through Tarachand's efforts, Madhu was married to Manohar and the latter became an instrument in the marriage of Pema to Tarachand.

Manjhan concluded the story with the remark that relentless efforts did not make anyone immortal. Only he who managed to die to himself in the path of love was immortal. The fire of life was the sole remedy for protecting an individual from the vicissitudes of Fate. Addressing his soul, Manjhan advised it to seek the protection of love in order to overcome the dominance of fate in both worlds. To him, the romance of Madhu-malati symbolized divine love.<sup>1</sup> He very boldly asserted that eternal lovers could sleep with each other without indulging in sex and that true love was invariably pure and serene.<sup>2</sup> This was equally true of love with the Divine wherein no worldly benefit was involved. Marriage symbolized the final union with the Divine.

In the preamble of the *Madhu-malati*, Manjhan very artistically reiterates the sufi and the medieval Bhakti theory of the self-manifestation of the Absolute.<sup>3</sup> Following the sufi line, Manjhan asserts that the Lord's motive in creating the world was His love for the Prophet Muhammad, and exhibits concern over the fact that although His hidden form was universally known, His manifestation in the form of Muhammad was not adequately recognized. Using the analogy of a tree, Manjhan—as well as certain other sufis—envisaged Muhammad as the root, while all worldly objects were the branches. Further, he compared Muhammad to a body whose shadow was the universe. Besides this, Muhammad was also the perfect form of the manifestation of the transcendental Lord. Manjhan exhorts the people to recognize the hidden aspects of Muhammad whom they did not know, and to conceive of him and the Lord as identical.<sup>4</sup> Manjhan further invites lovers, both worldly and

<sup>1</sup>Mataprasad Gupta ed., *Madhumalti*, p. 535.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, pp. 113-20, 318-34, 341.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 7-8.



divine, to believe in the universe which was the self-manifestation of the Lord. They themselves were comparable to lamps whose souls illumined the heavens and the entire universe. Speaking to those souls, he reminded them of this and thus warned that they should not be misled by hollow pride. Underlining the importance of *wachan* (word), Manjhan traces back its origin to the creative word (Be, *kun*) of Allah and identifies it with *Onkar*.<sup>1</sup>

Like the Hindi sufi poets, the poets of the Panjab, mainly the Qadiriyyas, chose their own dialect in which to express their mystic sensitivity and their exuberance. This they did in sweet, lyrical effusion. Their verses, known as *kafis*<sup>2</sup> and *abyat*,<sup>3</sup> exhibit their deep involvement with sufi thoughts and practices and their *masnawis*, although impregnated with descriptions of the fragile beauty of women and the local environment, always plunged the sufis into the depths of divine love and ecstasy. Unlike the *masnawis* of the Hindi sufi poets whose stories revolved around the courts of petty rulers, the Panjabi and Sindi *masnawis* based their themes on local romances, thereby adding a touch of realism to their verses.

The earliest known sufi poet of the Panjab was Baba Farid, whose descendants also wrote sufi poetry in a similar strain and with the nom-de-plume of Farid. A large corpus of the sufi poetry of Baba Farid's *khanqah* has been lost. However, a fragment was preserved by Guru Nanak and some more verses ascribed to Baba Farid and to his descendants have recently been discovered.<sup>4</sup>

Shaikh Madhu, the successor of the most colourful of the Panjabi sufis, Shaikh Husain, also wrote *kafis* giving emotional expression to his sufi beliefs in the *Wahdat al-Wujud*. Here is an emotive description of the suffering of the soul due to its separation from the source :

'The story of the pain of separation, O to whom shall I narrate, these pangs have made me mad, this separation is in my thought; from *jangal* (jungle) to *jangal* I roam searching, yet my 'Mahival' has not come. The smouldering fire has black flame, whenever I stir (it), I see the *Lal*; says Shah Husain, God's faqir, behold the lot of the humble ones.'<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mataprasad Gupta ed., *Madhumalti*, pp. 24-25.

<sup>2</sup>Vulgar form of *qafia*, or the final consonant on which the rhyme of a poem rests. The sufi poetry in the Panjabi language was generally written in distichs like *sakhis* and was known as *kafis*.

<sup>3</sup>Singular of 'bait' or distich, verse or couplet. The Panjabi poets found the *baits* or *abyat* a very convenient vehicle for the expression of mystic thoughts.

<sup>4</sup>See G.S. Talib, *Baba Shaikh Farid Shakarganj*, New Delhi, 1974.

<sup>5</sup>Mahwal is the hero of the famous Panjabi romantic poem 'Qissa-i Sohni Mahwal' by Fazal Shah and other poets. Lal here means red fire and also the Beloved. Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Panjabi Sufi Poetry, A.D. 1460-1900*, New Delhi, 1973, pp. 42-43.



Rejecting the belief of the transmigration of the soul, Madhu asserts :  
 '(Soul) has not to come again (as human being), O innocent mother, this turn of time (human birth) is only for this turn (life); this chess board (*samsara*) comprises eighty-four square (species); once separated after sufferings (of 84 species) is union (in God); what do I know that which (soul) obtains (after death in present life) ?'<sup>1</sup>

The sufi-soul does not rest content in its goal of being joined to the Primal One. Here is an example in which Madhu refers to the Panjabi lovers Hir-Ranjha, regarded as a model of true love :

Without the friend the nights have become longer, my flesh has fallen, my body has become a skeleton and (then) my bones rattle against each other; love can never be kept hidden, when separation has pitched its camp; Ranjha is a Yogi and I his Yogi, what has he done unto me ? Says Shah Husain, God's *faqir*, I have held Your skirt.<sup>2</sup>

The descendants of Hajji Muhammad Naushah have also recently published a selection of the Hajji's *diwan*, *Intikhab-i Ganj-Sharif*. The complete *diwan* is also likely to be published. The verses in the *Intikhab* are mainly in Hindi and Panjabi and suggest that Hajji Naushah was deeply influenced by the poetry of Kabir and Nanak. He wrote many *dohas* in which he answered questions earlier posed by Kabir. For example, Kabir wrote :

'Those who walk between limits are men,  
 Those who go beyond them are *pir*.  
 Those who transcend the limited and the limitless,  
 Are called *faqirs*.'<sup>3</sup>

Naushah wrote :

'None can walk between limits,  
 Who can transcend the limit ?  
 In name men came into the world,  
 Very few could achieve anything.

<sup>1</sup>Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Panjabi Sufi Poetry*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup>Had chalaïn so admi, behad chalaïn so *pir*,  
 Had behad dou tajaïn, jin ka naon *faqir*.

The form in which the above *doha* occurs in the known *Bijak* of Kabir is the following:

Had chale so manawa, behad chalai so sadh,  
 Had behad dou tajaï, takar mata agadh.

Sukhdeva Singh ed., *Kabir-Bijak*, Allahabad, 1972, p. 163.

Ch. Vaudeville translates the known version as under: *Kabir*, p. 262.

'He who walks between boundaries is a man.  
 he who goes beyond them is a saint.

But he who transcends the limited and the limitless.  
 his greatness is unfathomable'.



So what if one walked between limits,  
 So what if one transcended limits.  
 What loss was incurred by walking within limits ?  
 What harm was sustained by transcending limits ?

Both limited and limitless are delusion,  
 Faqirs are not involved with delusion.  
 Naushah himself is a *murid* (disciple),  
 He himself is a *pir*.

No harm is done to the limited,  
 No injury is sustained by the limitless.  
 Walk either limited or limitless,  
 But never forget the Lord.

The Lord encompasses both limited and limitless,  
 There is none except He.  
 Whether one is limited or limitless,  
 He does not transcend the Lord.

Limited and limitless are two only in name,  
 There is none but the One.  
 Whether one is limited or limitless,  
 One cannot go to someone else.

Both limited and limitless make [false] claims,  
 Only dervishes do not make any claim.  
 A lover makes no claims,  
 He is a stranger to his own self.

Dervishes make no claims,  
 Others make a hundred thousand claims,  
 Those who go straight are in difficulty,  
 This is the world's own way.

Followers of *Tawhid* (*Wahdat al-Wujud*) are abused,  
 The followers of *Tawhid* themselves, however, praise others.  
 We are friends of others,  
 Anyone else might oppose us.<sup>1</sup>

The above verses of Naushah assert his own deep conviction of the *Tawhid* and are not intended to criticize Kabir's middle path between 'limited' and 'limitless.' To him, Kabir, whom he mentions as 'Bhagat Kabir *jolaha*' (weaver), was successful in his quest for Reality, as was Guru Nanak.<sup>2</sup> Naushah's ethical teachings do not differ from those of Kabir and Nanak, but in one poem he very highly extols Islam on the grounds that it does not recognize the caste system and because all

<sup>1</sup>*Intikhab-i Ganj-Sharif*, pp. 259-60.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 299.



Muslims consider themselves brothers. *Kalima*, he states, has removed all differences.<sup>1</sup> In another poem, Naushah strongly criticizes the transmigration of souls theory of the Hindus.<sup>2</sup> Naushah's assertions were not without qualification. To him, only those Muslims were true to their faith who were obedient to a saintly *murshid*.<sup>3</sup> The target of his attack was the class and caste distinctions of Hinduism which, according to him, were man-made and removed the saints and holy men from the path of Truth. Similar caste distinctions among the Muslims, such as Saiyids, Quraishis, Mughal and Pathan, which divided them into higher or lower categories, deserved to be condemned outright, he wrote.<sup>4</sup> Like Kabir, he also wrote that differences between Hindu and Turk (Muslim) were erroneous, for pure gold was the same everywhere, that the difference arose only in form.<sup>5</sup> He defined a dervish in the following verse:

A dervish is at peace with all,  
He considers none as his enemy.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise he saw in the theory of the transmigration of souls the violation of the belief of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and a challenge to the omnipotence of God. Naushah also fought relentlessly against formal and mechanical religious practices. He wrote:

The mosque where Mulla lives,  
is not ours.  
O! Naushah the mosque is one,  
where one finds the Lord.<sup>7</sup>

As previously mentioned, the influence of Naushah's disciples spread from the Panjab to Kabul, but his poetry never achieved the same popularity or fame as that of other sufi poets such as Sultan Bahu or Bulhe Shah.

Sultan Bahu, whose real name was Sultan Muhammad, received his name from the words O Hu (He) with which he terminated all his verses. His father, Sultan Bazid (Bayazid), was a Saiyid and a dignitary in Shahjahan's court. He had settled in Sherkot, a village in the Jhang district of the Panjab given to him by the Emperor Shahjahan in recognition of his services to the Government. Sultan Muhammad was born in 1039/1629-30 and received his early education in his own village of Sherkot. He later went to Delhi and became a disciple of Pir 'Abdu'r-Rahman Qadiri who was also in the service of Shahjahan. The person who had the greatest influence upon him was his mother, Rasti, about whom Sultan Bahu himself wrote:

<sup>1</sup>*Intikhab-i Ganj-Sharif*, pp. 300, 302-3.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 202.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 296.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 275.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 305.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, pp. 267, 298.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, p. 273.



Bliss of God for Rasti be  
For, with Truth is gifted she.<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Bahu wrote some twenty Persian treatises and also composed Persian poetry, but his fame rests on his Panjabi sufi poetry which he composed with great lyrical exuberance. Not only were his *abyat* welcome at the *sama*' gatherings but were, and still are, upon the lips of all sections of the Panjabi community. The theme of his *abyat* is the traditional self-manifestation of the Absolute and the pre-eminence of life led in spiritual dedication and asceticism. What made them unique and inimitable however was his evocative and emotive style. Here is an example of his delineation of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*:

Vanished are the forests, rivers,  
Oneness [*Wahdat*] is in flood and spate  
Lovers fight not shy of drinking  
Brimful cups of Death and Hate  
Rubbing ash on bodies graceful  
hundreds walk the lovers' gait  
I am all for persons, Bahoo!  
Valiant, brave and regenerate.<sup>2</sup>

Valiantly swim in it lovers  
God is Unity's River, dear.  
Turn by turn they dive deep fathoms  
Fishing pearls from far and near  
"Matchless Pearl"<sup>3</sup> in depth, resplendent  
Dazzling, like the full-moon clear  
Bahoo! Dearly pay their homage  
Servants of the peerless<sup>4</sup> Peer!<sup>5</sup>

The relation of Ahmad to Ahad (One) is depicted thus:

In it there's no room for reason  
Unity's being secret, holy  
Mullas, pundits and astrologers  
Fail therein completely, wholly  
If you spy 'Ahad' from 'Ahmad'  
World will end in melancholy  
Closing all the heavenly scriptures  
Bahoo learnt this knowledge souly.<sup>6</sup>

Reminding Hindus and Muslims of the Lord, he wrote:

<sup>1</sup>Maqbool Elahi tr., *The Abyat of Sultan Bahoo*, Lahore, 1967, p. xi.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 169.

<sup>3</sup>Durr-i yalim, a title of the Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>5</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup>Prophet Muhammad.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, p. 119.



Neither Hindus nor are Momins  
 Nor in mosque they go to pray  
 With each breath and every moment  
 Timelessly see Allah they  
 Wise were they but turned wiseacres  
 Perfect Essence keeps them gay  
 Life of mine be ransom for them  
 Bahoo! Lovers wend this way.<sup>1</sup>

The relation of the seeker to *pir* or *murshid* is described thus:

Murshid: Mecca, Seeker: Haji  
 And let love the Ka'ba be  
 In the presence of these factors  
 Haj perform do always we  
 Does not leave me for a moment  
 Yearning for my Murshid, see!  
 Seeping in my hair-roots Bahoo  
 I am he and he is me.<sup>2</sup>

Murshid's lesson is so different  
 Reading not, I read and read  
 Plugging fingers in my ears  
 Hearing not, I hear and heed.  
 Eye to eye transmits the lesson  
 Seeing not, I see in-deed  
 Bahoo! He dwells in my being  
 Love of his, my senses feed.<sup>3</sup>

Murshid lives at far far distance  
 For me his is ever here  
 Matters not if I can't see him  
 For, in me he dwells, the dear.  
 Perfect ones in love of Allah  
 Move, advance and never fear  
 Disputatious Bahoo! Listen!  
 "We,<sup>4</sup> than jugular vein are near."<sup>5</sup>

Sultan Bahu waxes eloquent when praising the founder of the Qadiriyya order. He writes:

Followers of the Ghauth-ul-A'zam:  
 Would God, they are never ill !  
 Those who have one grain of loving,  
 Ever are in pang and chill

<sup>1</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 158.

<sup>4</sup>*Qur'an*, L. 16.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 154.

<sup>5</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 157.



Lured by chances of a meeting  
 Hopeful is their joyous drill  
 Lucky in both worlds are, Bahoo !  
 Lovers who gain Allah's Will.<sup>1</sup>

Rare it is I sleep at night  
 Days are spent in wonderment  
 Gnostics know the tongue of gnostics  
 For the worldly 'tis not meant  
 Worship Him and get at something  
 Youth to wastage you had lent  
 Audience His-will get, O Bahoo!  
 "Jeelani" whom guidance sent.<sup>2</sup>

Here are some examples of Sultan Bahu's invocation to the Ghausu'l-A'zam:

Sorry plaint, Mentor of mentors  
 If you hear not, who will then?  
 Like you, I have none, my dear  
 Like me you have million men,  
 Unroll not my scroll of evils  
 Push me not out of your pen  
 Had Bahoo been not so sinful  
 Whom would you forgive and when?

Set your ears to plaint of mine,  
 O Mentor of Mentors! Hear !  
 Fleet of mine is deep in typhoon  
 Crocodiles where shake in fear  
 Shah Jeelani, Allah's favourite !  
 Kindly come! Rescue me, dear !  
 Only followers his, O Bahoo !  
 Swim home out of peril clear.<sup>3</sup>

The following verses give Sultan Bahu's definitions of a mystic:

No ! No ! Not ecstatic cries  
 Starting people in their sleep  
 No ! No ! Nor escorting dry through  
 Rivers rushing, gushing deep  
 Not even in air stable  
 Prayer-mat for show, to keep  
 Mysticism is love of Allah  
 Bahoo ! Showmanship is cheap<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 103.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 87.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 75.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 165.



Neither jogi nor a sadhu  
 Nor did I perfect penance  
 Nor in mosque did 'show-crash' I  
 Nor displayed a holy stance  
 'Each unmindful breath: infidel'  
 Spake my Murshid in a trance  
 Salvation is yours for sure  
 Bahoo! Come, cheer up and dance.<sup>1</sup>

Sultan Bahu very firmly adhered to the rules of *Shari'a*. Nevertheless he rejected formal prayers and worship, writing:

Kneeling, praying, fasting, doling  
 All are womanly pursuits  
 To Mecca tread only travellers  
 Empty hearted and sans-roots  
 Longest, loudest in professions  
 While their hearts care not two hoots  
 Useless are mere proclamations  
 Bahoo! Heart's contentment suits.<sup>2</sup>

Rites of fasting, praying, abstaining  
 Cries in wilderness are, ho!  
 Rituals do not lead to Allah  
 Read thyself and thyself know  
 Never, never, meets Beloved  
 Through the rituals, no, oh no!  
 Burn yourself with Love, O Bahoo:  
 And be one with One and glow!

Raining tears of blood at night  
 Days I spend in grip of sorrow  
 Not one peaceful moment for me  
 Unity's sorrow's grip is thorough  
 Secret of my love is patent  
 Cross and Christ's simile I borrow  
 Drained of blood completely, Bahoo!  
 Drops of sorrow sow for morrow.<sup>3</sup>

The prayers of divine lovers, according to him, were performed in the following manner:

Invoking His love in prayers  
 Lovers speak not syllable single  
 All and sundry are so helpless,  
 With their bows or with bell-jingle

<sup>1</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*,

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. 76.



For ablutions lovers loyal  
 Blood with tears mix and mingle  
 Prayers genuine where are Bahoo !  
 Lips don't move and tongues don't tingle.<sup>1</sup>  
 'Ishq's *mu'ezzin*<sup>2</sup> called for prayers  
 Heard it loving nightingale.  
 It performed ablutions promptly  
 With its life-blood, hearty, hale.  
 Hearing call for self-effacement  
 Turned back? No! It did not fail.  
 Saying, 'God is Great', O Bahoo !  
 Thanking, Love-ward set its sail!<sup>3</sup>

Underlining the importance of a righteous heart, he wrote:

Though this heart devoted itself  
 To the theme of Oneness, dear !  
 Burning mid-night oil in plenty  
 Gaining nothing sound and clear  
 Lesson one my labours gathered:  
 'Only name of Allah, hear.'  
 This also the next world, Bahoo !  
 Slaves of yours will be, I swear!<sup>4</sup>  
 Infidel will he die, the pseudo,  
 Seeking, 'Faqr' without his soul  
 Hundred years of worship useless  
 He will not achieve his goal  
 Neglect won't unravel mysteries,  
 Heart untrained: an idols' hole !  
 All praise be for those who, Bahoo !  
 Kiss unique Beloved's sole.<sup>5</sup>

On 1 Jumada II 1102/2 March 1691 Sultan Bahu died and was buried in the village of Kaharjanaan on the banks of the Chanab near Sherkot. Floods prompted his descendants to move his earthly remains in 1180/1766/67 and again on 1 Muharram 1336/17 October 1917, when they were transferred to their present location.<sup>6</sup>

The greatest sufi poet of the Panjab was Mir Bullhe Shah Qadiri Shattari, His *pir*, Shah 'Inayat (d. 1041/1631-32) and the latter's spiritual guide, Shah Riza, were also eminent Qadiriyya and Shattariyya sufis of the Panjab, Mir Bullhe Shah's ancestors belonged to Bhawalpur; Shah's

<sup>1</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>One who calls to prayers.

<sup>3</sup>*The Abyat*, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 64.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 112.

<sup>6</sup>I'jazu'l-Haqq Quddusi, *Tazkira-i Sufiya-i Panjab*, Karachi, 1962, pp. 155-56.



own father Sakhi Shah Muhammad Darvesh migrated to Sahiwal and Mir Bullhe Shah himself lived in Qasur. Bullhe Shah's *khanqah* was a very popular rendezvous of the sufis in the region and he initiated his disciples into many other orders, such as Madariyya, Chishtiyya and Suhrawardiyya. He died some time after 1181/1767-68.<sup>1</sup> The touching mystic ecstasy of his verses made Bullhe Shah's poetry a household word in the Panjab. In describing the *Wahdat al-Wujud* he was exceedingly frank and never tired of inventing novel imagery to render his thoughts more effective. Some dozen different editions of Bullhe's poems have been published and a good edition of his poems (*Kulliyat-i Bullhe Shah*) has also recently been brought out by the Panjabi academy, Lahore.

Like all sufis, Bullhe Shah was never tired of self-examination. For example, he wrote:

'Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither am I a Muslim in the mosque nor am I in the ways of paganism, nor among the pure or sinful, nor am I Moses or the Pharaoh; Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither in the books of doctors I, nor indulged I in *bhang*<sup>2</sup> and wine, nor in the wine-house in the company of the bad, neither awake nor asleep. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither in happiness nor in sorrow, nor in sin or purity nor of water nor of earth, nor in fire nor in air. Bullha, what do I know who I am? I am not of Arabia nor of Lahore, nor an Indian nor of the city of Nagaur, neither a Hindu nor a Muslim of Peshawar, nor do I live in Nadaun. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Neither have I found the secret of religion, nor of Adam and Eve am I born, neither have I taken a name, my life is neither settled nor unsettled. Bullha, what do I know who I am? Myself I know as the first and the last, none else as second do I recognize, none else is wiser than I. Bullha, who is the true master?',<sup>3</sup>

Elsewhere he again wrote with similar enthusiasm :

'Neither Hindu nor Mussulman (*sic*), let us sit to spin, abandoning pride (of religion). Neither a *sunni* nor a shi'a, I have taken the path of complete peace and unity. Neither am I hungry (poor) nor satisfied (rich), nor naked I nor covered. Neither am I weeping nor laughing nor deserted nor settled. Neither a sinner, I, nor a pure one, I am not walking in the way of either sin or virtue. Bullha, in all hearts I feel the Lord, (therefore) Hindu and Mussulmans (*sic*) both have I abandoned.'<sup>4</sup>

In the eighteenth century there lived in the Panjab, Waris Shah, a

<sup>1</sup>*Khazinatu'l-asfiya'*, pp. 198-99; Prayer book in the possession of 'Abdu'l-'Aziz of Firuzpur. cf. *Sufiya-i Panjab*, pp. 161-62.

<sup>2</sup>Indian hemp, here Hindu ascetics are meant.

<sup>3</sup>Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Panjabi Sufi Poets*, New Delhi, 1973, p. 79.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 85.



Chishtiyya Sufi who in 1180/1766 re-versified the celebrated Panjabi folk-story Hir-Ranjha.

Waris Shah was born in the village of Jandyala Sher Khan near Gujranwala and studied at Qasur under Hafiz Ghulam Murtaza. In his youth he fell in love with a village girl of Pak-Pattan. Scandalized by a Saiyid stooping to such depths, the villagers drove him out of their village and Waris Shah was forced to retire to a village in the Sahiwal district. There he found spiritual comfort by versifying the romance of Hir-Ranjha. Although several other reversifications exists—one of them by the sixteenth century poet Damodar (1556-1605)—it is the artistry of Waris Shah which has made his Hir-Ranjha immortal. The story itself seems to have originated in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. By that time several Jat tribes of the Panjab had been Islamicized and settled to the peaceful and sedentary life of the village agriculturist.

Hir, the daughter of Chuchak, the Sial, chief of Jhang, betrothed in her childhood to Saida, the son of Khora, the village chieftain of Rangpur, falls in love with Ranjha, the youngest son of a different tribal chief. After the death of his father, Ranjha is expelled by his brothers from his village in order to deprive him of his share in the ancestral property. Hir's father, on his daughter's recommendation, employs Ranjha as a cowherd but expels him from the village as soon as he learns of his daughter's love affairs with the cowherd boy. Hir is married and sent to Rangpur but she does not allow her husband to touch her. Ranjha, disguised as a jogi, reaches Rangpur and manages to elope with Hir. However, they are caught and Hir is incarcerated and Ranjha ordered never to enter the village. Shortly afterwards the village catches fire and the loss is attributed to the curse of the lovers. The village priests repent, cancel the previous marriage of Hir and allow her to marry Ranjha. Hir, accompanied by Ranjha, returns home and Ranjha leaves for Jhang to make wedding preparations. However, Hir's brother and uncle, who were never reconciled to their marriage, break the false news of Ranjha's murder on his way home. Grief-stricken, she becomes unconscious and is poisoned by her uncle and brother. Learning of the tragedy, Ranjha returns and falls dead on Hir's grave.

In Waris Shah's version, the five *pirs* (*panch pir*) are actually identified, while to Bengalis they remain obscure. They are Khwaja Khizr, the lord of all the waters, Baba Farid Shakarganj, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar, Shaikh Baha'u'd-Din Zakariyya and Makhdum Jahaniyan Jalal Bukhari. They bless Ranjha and promise help in all trials and tribulations, warning him, however, not to use Hir as a wife.

It is very interesting to read the lecture on love given by the barber woman, Mithi, whom both Ranjha and Hir take into their confidence. She tells Ranjha :

'The way of love is hard and the path is tortuous. The taste of love is



as bitter as poison. The very letters of 'Ishq are like the coils of a snake and only very wise men know its secrets. Love to the potter woman is part of the day's work like eating and drinking; the love of a shepherdess is fierce like a wolf; the love of a Sikh woman is as violent as the current of the Chenab. The love of a shroff woman is as clear-cut as the 37 on the coins of Muhammad Shah. The Bengali woman's love is fitful. The Hindustani's is childish. A little girl's love is fretful and peevish; she is always taunting and reproaching her lover. Kanjars know not what love is. God's curse on the casual light-o'-loves. Touch them not. The love of a Khatri woman is as soft as dough. The hill woman loves openly but the Peshawarwo man is secret. But hark ye! The birth place of love is among the Sials. Jhang is the father of love and the Chenab is its mother. Did not Love exist from the beginning of the world? Did not God love Muhammad? Did not the holy saints know Love: even Adam and Eve, and Zakaria who got caught in a tree and was sawn asunder? Did not Abraham love Ismael? Was not God displeased with King Solomon and did not He cast him down from his throne in his displeasure, in the twinkling of an eye? Love also slew Hasan and Husain the holy martyrs, and is not the list of earthly Lovers long and famous; even Mirza Sahiban, Chander Badan, Shirin, Kamrup, Sassi and Punnoo, Laila and Majnun, Sohni and Mahiwal, Joseph and Zuleika ?<sup>1</sup>

Waris Shah does not hesitate to put it into Ranjha's mind that the way of salvation is known to the yogi Balnath who lived on the mound known as Tilla Balnath. The following is the description of yoga as given by Balnath:

'Jog is very troublesome task. The taste of Jog is bitter and sour. You will have to dress as a Jogi, to wear dirty clothes, long hair, cropped skull and to beg your way through life. You will have to give up the pleasures of birth, to cease to rejoice when friends come or to grieve when they die. You will have to abstain from casting eyes on women. You will have to become divinely intoxicated by taking *kand, mul, post*, opium and other narcotic drugs. You will have to think the world a mere vision. You will have to go on long pilgrimages to Jagannath, Godavari, Ganges and Jamna. Jog is no easy task. You Jats cannot attain Jog.'

However, Balnath yields to Ranjha's request to become a Jogi, but his senior disciples, like those of the sufis, are annoyed. Here is their protest: 'You are opening your arms to this good looking Jat', they said 'and yet you do not give Jog to those who have undergone much trouble for many years. Verily Jogis have become enamoured of comely boys.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Mumtaz Hasan ed., *The adventures of Hir and Ranjha*, London, 1973, pp. 62-63.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 95-96.



Balnath rejects his disciples and proceeds to initiate Ranjha in the following manner:

'And the Guru took off Ranjha's clothes and having rubbed him in ashes and embraced him, made him sit by his side. Then he took the razor of separation and shaved him completely. Then he bored his ears and put earrings on him. He gave him the beggar's bowl, the rosary, the horn and the shell in his hands, and made him learn the word of Allah. He taught him the way of God and the Gurus from the beginning, saying, 'Your heart should be far from other men's women. That is the way of Jog. An old woman should be treated as your mother and a young woman as your sister.'

Here is the reply of Ranjha who had decided to become a yogi only in order to meet his beloved:

'Had I been only a lover of God, I should have sought only Him. If I had been silent before the love of women, would I have deserted my family and ruined myself? Hir has captivated my heart. That is why I have become a Jogi. I have become a *fakir* only that I might keep my Love in remembrance. Had I known that you would try to keep me from my Love, I would never have set foot on your hill of Tilla. Had I known that you would bore my ears, I would have put these earrings in the fire. Set my ears right or I will bring the sepoy of the Sirkar here . . . We Jats are cunning strategists and we use all means to compass our hearts' desire. I will invoke the name of my *Pir*, my Guru and of God and pitch my flag in Rangpur where I will cut off the nose of the Kheras and spite the Sials. Do not think I can ever give up Hir. *Gurus* who try to keep their disciples from women are as foolish as driven cattle. I will open my heart frankly to you. What can a Jat do with a beggar's bowl or horn, whose heart is set only on ploughing? What is the good of teaching him to tell his beads when all he can do is to tell the tale of his cattle? I will be frank with you. I must search for my beloved. She belongs to me. And I am pursuing nobody else's property. The snake of Love has coiled itself round my heart and is sucking my life blood from me. My bones and my flesh melt when I am separated from Hir. Love fell on us when we were both young. Hir had her hair in long plaits and I had a small beard. We passed the Spring and Summer of our Love together, then evil days came and Hir's parents preferred to marry her elsewhere, and they betrothed her to the Kheras. When the stormy wind of calamity fell upon me, I became a *fakir* and embraced the labours of austerity. You are the only true *Guru* in the world, and it is only through your kindness that a poor traveller can guide his boat ashore. Give me Hir. That is all I ask. My heart begs for Hir and for Hir alone.'

Ultimately, Balnath understands Ranjha and, joined by his five *pirs*,



blesse him.<sup>1</sup>

As was the case in other regions of India, the *sama*<sup>4</sup> gatherings of Sindh also reverberate with sufi music in the local dialect. The compositions of the pre-sixteenth century sufi poets have been lost but many Mahdawi utterances in local dialects still survive, as do seven couplets of Qazi Qazan. Makhdum Nuh (1505-1590) and Makhdum Pir Muhammad. Lakhwi (d. 1590) are also known to have written sufi verses in Sindi. A true pioneer of Sindi poetry was Saiyid 'Abdu'l-Karim or Shah Karim (1537-1628) of Bulri in Hyderabad Sind. Shah Karim led the life of an ordinary peasant and his poetry shows a deep sympathy with ordinary villagers and fishermen whose professional activity offered him a wide range of lyrical imagery. A huge superstructure of sufi poetry on the foundation laid by Shah Karim was built by his great grandson, Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif Bhitai.

The Shah was born in 1102/1690-91 in the village of Halla Haveli in Hala Taluka, Hyderabad Sind. His father, Shah Habib, was an eminent sufi and tradition has it that he allowed his son to remain illiterate in order better to sharpen his interest in sufism, for which he had shown a great inclination since his early childhood. However, the internal evidence of Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif's *Risalos* (works) suggests that he had in fact read the Qur'an and Persian poetry. The impact upon him of the *Masnawi* of Maulana Rum, whose spirit he manages to convey in his Sindi *Risalo*, was very deep.

As a young man, Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif fell in love with the daughter of Mirza Mughal Beg, a proud scion of the previous Afghan rulers of Sind. Although 'Abdu'l-Latif was a Saiyid, the aristocratic Mirza would not agree to marry his daughter even to the talented son of his *pir* because of the marked differences in their social status. One was an aristocrat, the other a family priest. The lovelorn Shah left home in frustration, wandered across the deserts of Jaisalmer and even the mountains of Kabul. He accompanied the jogis and even visited Dwarka in Hinglaj. In 1124/1713, Mirza Mughal Beg was assassinated by robbers who decamped with all his riches. By that time, Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif who had returned was already a Sindi poet of great renown. The Mirza's family, which was reduced to poverty, ascribing their misfortune to the curses of the Saiyid, married their daughter to him. The difference between their social status by then had disappeared. The number of Saiyid's disciples soon began to increase and he migrated from his village, Kotri, to a new hermitage at a sand mound called Bhit, near Kirar lake, four miles from New Hala. In 1155/1742 the death of Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif's father prompted the sufi to move his relations from Kotri to Bhit. However, he himself was not destined to live long and on 14 Safar 1165/2 January 1752 he died. An imposing

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat*, II, no. 92.



tomb was erected over his grave at Bhit near Hala-Kundi.<sup>1</sup>

Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif's poetic works, called *Risalo*, set the Panjabi and Sindi folktales in a very sensitive framework of sufism. He himself warns his admirers:

'Think not, O man, that these are mere couplets:

they are divine verses

That bear thee to the sacred precincts of the Beloved.<sup>2</sup>

Here is an example of the Unity of Being in the *Sur Asa*:

'Across Life's ocean no one yet

With "I" as guide his foot hath set:

God indeed who is one

Adoreth oneness alone.

Take twoness off to burn with fire:

Existence may man's tears require.

This weeping should be done

Before oneness alone.<sup>3</sup>

The *unio-mystica* is portrayed thus:

'Restrain myself howe'er I try

I cannot stay unless I see

Beloved's face. Unbounded grief

Without my love assaileth me.

Avaunt tomorrow : I'll not bide

By promise that tomorrow tells.

I cannot wait tomorrow's day.

Or meet me, love, or kill me, else.

Bring union to a wretched girl

Or kill her: only show her eyes

The Friend she loves. Sad soul, dismiss

Thy sorrow from thy memories.'<sup>4</sup>

The following are the opening verses in the abridgement of *Risalo* called *Muntakhab*:

'In the beginning Allah is,

Who knoweth all, who sits aloft,

The Lord of all the world that be,

He is the mighty, old of days,

Of His own power established.

<sup>1</sup>'Ali Sher Qani' Tattawi, *Maqalatu'sh-shu'ara*, Karachi, 1957, pp. 428-29, H.T. Sorley ed., *Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif of Bhit*, reprinted, London, 1966, pp. 170-76; M.M. Gidvani, *Shah 'Abdul-Latif*, London, 1922; K.B. Advani, *Shah Latif*, Delhi, 1970.

<sup>2</sup>U.M. Daudpota, Sindhi Literature in S.M. Ikram ed., *The cultural heritage of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1955, p. 157.

<sup>3</sup>Sorley ed., *Shah 'Abdul-Latif*, p. 227.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, p. 227.



He is the Lord, One, only One,  
Sustainer and Compassionate.  
Sing ye the praise of Him who heals,  
The True One, sing ye praise of Him.<sup>1</sup>

Among the different romantic stories chosen by Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif to invite sufis to concentrate on divine love is the Sasui-Punhun. Mir Ma'sum Nami Bhakkari, a historian, calligrapher and poet, described the story of Sasui-Punhun in his Persian *Khamsa*. He entitled his Sasui-Punhun *Husn wa Naz*. During the reign of the Emperor Muhammad Shah Qazi Murtaza Sorathi also composed a Persian *masnawi* on Sasui-Punhun. The story as described by Mir 'Ali Sher Qani Tattawi is as follows:

In the reign of Dalw Rai, Naniya a brahman and his spouse Mandhar were blessed after a long time with the birth of a beautiful baby girl. The astrologers' prophecy that the girl would marry a Muslim shocked the parents so much that they locked the baby in a box and threw it into the river. The box was found by a washerman of Bhambhor who had five hundred apprentices working under him. The childless washerman and his wife adopted the baby and named her Sasui, meaning moon. Sasui grew up to be a beautiful woman whose fame and beauty induced Punhun, the son of the Governor of Kech-Makran to fall deeply in love with her. He left his home and joined a caravan which was going to Bhambhor. The sight of Sasui sharpened his love which was reciprocated even more intensely by Sasui. Punhun became her father's apprentice and after some time the couple were married. Punhun's father, however, had him kidnapped by his other sons, whereupon Sasui left home in search of her beloved. She died on her way to Kech, mysteriously disappearing into the rock. A shepherd made an improvised grave to mark the place.

Punhun's father, finding his son near to death due to his separation from his beloved, sent him back with his brothers to bring Sasui to Kech. When the party reached Sasui's grave and Punhun learnt of his beloved's tragic death, he fell crying on the grave. The rock again split open and the bodies of Sasui and Punhun were united in death, to become immortal in the popular mind.<sup>2</sup>

The most celebrated version of the story, however, differs markedly in detail from the above. Here is the summary by H.T. Sorley:

'Sasui, the daughter of a rich Hindu, a Brahman, was later because of her beauty adopted as his daughter by the Chief of Bhambhor. In due course she became herself the ruler of Bhambhor. Owing to famine in Kech the people of that land had sent a deputation to Bhambhor to purchase corn. The leader of the caravan from Kech succeeded in

<sup>1</sup>Sorley ed., *Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif*, p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>'Ali Sher Qani' Tattawi, *Tuhfatul-kiram*, I, Karachi, 1971, pp. 46-51.



obtaining a remission in the price of the grain from Sasui by promising to bring Punhun, the son of Ari Jam, the Chief of Kech, to Bhambhor. This young man was famed for the handsomeness of his features, and Sasui was anxious to meet him. The caravan-leader, leaving the camel train at Bhambhor, returned to Kech and succeeded in getting Punhun to visit Bhambhor. There Sasui and Punhun fell violently in love with each other. Punhun stayed behind when the caravan of camels loaded with grain returned to Kech. Ari Jam was angry that his son had not returned and sent the leader of the caravan accompanied by Punhun's two brothers back to Bhambhor to bring him home. This was done by the pretence of a friendly visit and then secretly one night Punhun was taken away by his brothers. In the morning Sasui discovered that the camels were gone and that her lover had departed. In a paroxysm of grief she set out on foot to track the camels and endured great hardships in her bewildered wanderings over the barren country that lay between Bhambhor and Kech, with its sandy deserts and its bare, gaunt mountain ranges. She perished upon the way in her search for her lover.<sup>1</sup>

Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif does not himself give the details of the story but masterly portrays only some thrilling episodes in order to use them as the background for his mystical teachings of quest, separation and death. In it he obviously imitates the *Masnawi* stories of Maulana Rumi. For example, he says:

'By dying live that thou mayst feel  
 The beauty of Beloved. Thou  
 Wilt surely do the righteous thing  
 If thou wilt follow this advice.  
 Die, that thou prosper. Sit not down,  
 O woman, live and after death  
 Thou wilt unto thy Punhun come.  
 They who so died before their death  
 By death are not in death subdued.  
 Assuredly they live who lived  
 Before their life of living was.  
 Who lived before their living was  
 From age to age will live for aye.  
 They will not die again who died  
 Before the dying came to them.  
 Thou didst not know thy death was there,  
 In quiet questing for thy love.  
 Thou didst not hear, O woman, this:

<sup>1</sup>Sorley, *Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif*, p. 361.



'Die : why dost thou behead thyself ?'<sup>1</sup>

In *Suhini and Mehar* the romance of Suhini, a rich potter's daughter, and 'Izzat Beg, the son of a prosperous Mughal merchant, enables Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif to use imagery from the potter's professional activity in order to explain the nature of Divine will. He says:

'Time was when God, the One and the Eternal, spake.

Unto the souls and thundered: 'Am I not your Lord?'

Then, even then, to Suhini had there come a love

And longing for the neatherd. 'Twas of God's own will  
That might of waters broke her earthen pot in twain.

What fate God's will had fashioned for her there indeed  
She brought to due fulfilment in this world below.'<sup>2</sup>

Describing asceticism and the qualities of holy men, Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif gives his opinion of what a jogi should be:

'If thou dost think 'I will a Jogi be',  
Break off all ties that link thee with thy kind.  
Unite thy life to them who ne'er were born  
Nor e'er will be, that thou thine end may find  
Upon the plain of Love.

If thou dost think 'I will a Jogi be',  
Kill all ambition's hope, Become the slave  
Of them who're slaves of slaves. With patience-sword  
Destroy all malice utterly, that so  
They name in Lahut thou may'st then engrave,  
O Nanga's naked soul.

If thou dost think 'I will a Jogi be',  
Kill worldly thought and hide it in the soil.  
Light in thine heart the dully-glowing fire.  
In mind count rosary's beads: with humble toil  
Bear all God's little ways.

If thou dost think 'I will a Jogi be',  
Drain cup of Nothingness and, sitting, gaze  
On Nothingness itself. Lay hold of it.  
( 'Where there is I : that Nothingness displays' )  
So, Seeker, full thy joy of pasture be  
With God  
One, perfect One.  
Jogis have no hold on life.  
Put on Joga : cease to live.

<sup>1</sup>Sorley, *Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif*, p. 379.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 397.



O hark! With these ears hear  
The message that I give.

Self-ness destroy and from the self  
Lay self aside. No life hath 'This',  
No Life at all. 'Tis fools  
Whose 'I' in talking is.

Be Jogi whilst thou hast the power  
Else, shameless one, avaunt from here!  
Why dost thou bore thine ears  
If cold thou canst not bear?

Flee hence! go thither! far away!  
Lest others thou do bring to shame.  
Men who are slaves to food  
Are Jogis false in name

Immersed in belly-needs the throng  
Is worthless scum. No sound comes clear  
To skull-placed ears: then list  
To sounds with inward ear.<sup>1</sup>

Many important Sindi poets following Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif's style wrote beautiful poetry during the reign of the local dynasties of Kalhora (1657-1703) and Talpur (1783-1843). 'Abdu'l-Wahhab Sachal Sarmast (1739-1826) was the only one, however, who could match Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif in mystic poetry, although he was never able to excel his senior contemporary. He had learnt the Qur'an by heart and was adequately trained in Islamic theology but remained uninhibited in mystical ecstasy. Discussing how earlier sufis such as Hallaj and Sarmad fearlessly courted death, he wrote:

'Welcome, welcome you are! To which place will you bring me?  
You will again cut a head!  
Giving a kick to Sarmad, you have killed him; you have brought  
Mansur to the gallows: you have cut off Shaikh 'Attar's head now,  
you are taking the way here!  
You have split Zakariya with a saw, have thrown Joseph into a well:  
you have made kill Shams by the hands of the mollahs; you use to  
afflict the lover . . .'<sup>2</sup>

Sarmast very elegantly examines his own personality when he writes:

'I do not know, O sisters, what I really am? . . .  
Perhaps I am a doll, perhaps the thread on which it hangs,

<sup>1</sup>Sorley, *Shah 'Abdu'l-Latif*, pp. 352-53.

<sup>2</sup>A. Schimmel, *Sindi Literature* in J. Gonda ed., *A history of Indian Literature*, Wiesbaden, 1974, p. 22.



perhaps a ball in the hand of the beloved, perhaps a yoke with heavy burden,  
 perhaps a castle where the king sits and thinks and talks about many things for getting new information  
 Perhaps I am a horse which some rider guides,  
 perhaps a wave of the ocean which drowns the outward being,  
 perhaps a henna-flower with red colouring,  
 perhaps a rose, the head full of scent,  
 perhaps I am a fountain, filled by a cloud, in which the sun is reflected and the moon as well.  
 Perhaps I am God's mirror from pre-eternity which is beyond all words—  
 perhaps I am not at all . . .<sup>1</sup>

The sufi poets discussed in the preceding pages were all staunch followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* who saw the manifestation of the Divine in every object. Shaikh 'Abdu'r-Rahman Girhori (1739-1778) however, like his *pir*, Makhdum Zaman Lanwari Naqshbandi (d. 1774) was a remarkable Sindi poet and was dedicated to the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. He himself wrote mystic letters in Persian and condensed the letters of the Mujaddid. Schimmel says, "Veneration of the Prophet of Islam was the centre of his (Girhori's) life and induced him to fight against the idol-worshippers who denied his glory; he sought and found martyrdom by destroying a Shiva sanctuary in a near-by village."<sup>2</sup> In fact, Girhori's death did not occur from the veneration of the Prophet Muhammad but resulted from his indiscreet adherence to the Mujaddid's teachings. In Jahangir's reign, a follower of the Mujaddid who is said to have attempted to clandestinely destroy a village temple was miraculously saved by some Muslim soldiers who were camping near the village,<sup>3</sup> but Girhori does not seem to have been so fortunate!

The eighteenth century also saw the crystallization of the poetic form of Urdu in northern India. Two great sufi poets of this period were Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar and Khwaja Mir Dard, both being Naqshbandiyyas of the Mujaddid's school. Mirza Jan-i Janan Mazhar occasionally wrote Urdu verses but the number of *ghazals* written by Dard is quite substantial. Some modern critics however are not impressed with the sufic strain in Dard's poetry. For example, Muhammad Sadiq says: "He was a man first and a theologian afterwards, and to refine him away into a spiritual abstraction is to ignore the sensuous side of his mind. I am wondering how his ingenious commentators will fit the following into a scheme of spiritual values:

<sup>1</sup>A. Schimmel, *Sindi Literature* in J. Gonda ed., *A history of Indian Literature*, Wiesbaden, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 20.

<sup>3</sup>*Zubdatu'l-maqamat*, pp. 262-63; *MRM*, pp. 312-13.



Flowers and orchards do not interest me;  
 The garden has no charm for me without the beloved.  
 Make the best of your time, for life will not come back to you,  
 If some of your life remains, youth will not come back to you.

Go, cry, and sigh and eat out your heart,  
 It is well said that youth should be given to wine and revelry.

Alas, all my efforts have come to nothing and my hopes have been blighted.

What a pity ! I never had a chance to meet her.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, the reader of these two volumes of sufism needs no reminding that flowers, orchards, beloved, youth and the like had no sensuous significance for the sufis and were merely symbols and imagery designed to waken them to the mystical dimension of their being. Dard was not a theologian but a sufi leader of the Mujaddidi *silsila* who believed that both the *Wahdat al-Shuhud* and the *Wahdat al-Wujud* were identical. Although many eminent Urdu poets, such as Mir Taqi Mir did not lead a *khanqah* life, sufism and the *Wahdat al-Wujud* stimulated them to write inspiring mystical poetry. However, a large number of them borrowed conventional ideas from sufi poets which they repeated slavishly. It must be said though that sufism did add an interesting dimension to the lyrics of born poets like Ghalib (1797-1869), who unhesitatingly sang:

“I (literal, we) am a *muwahhid*; I believe in renouncing traditional (religious) practices,

When religious differences (literally religious) disappear, the (remaining) essence becomes the basis of the (one true) faith.”

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad Sadiq, *A history of Urdu literature*, London, 1964, pp. 103-4.



## Conclusion

IN the preceding pages of this book and also in volume One we have only given an account of the important sufi centres and described the life and teachings of the leading sufis and their disciples. Naturally we have confined our studies only to the urban centres. The evidence marshalled by us suggests that, until the middle of the nineteenth century, sufi shaiikhs were the natural religious guides of the people from whom men from all cross-sections of society solicited spiritual guidance and worldly advice. The lack of literary evidence is the most formidable obstacle to the presentation of any pictures of village *khanqahs* where the tombs of local *pirs* and fictitious *dargahs*, ascribed to eminent sufis such as Ghaus-*pir* or Ghausu'l-A'zam, and the graves of the local martyrs both real and unreal had been—and still are—the sole comfort of their inhabitants in their sufferings and anguish. In medieval times, the village *khanqahs*, howsoever humble they might have been, offered lodgings and refreshments to travellers and helped the more religious villagers to sharpen their spiritual awareness through *zikr* and meditation. The *khanqahs* provided both Muslim and Hindu villagers with amulets, talismans and charms designed to prevent sickness, disease, misfortune, damage to crops by natural calamities, and other catastrophes. The mutual interpenetration of sufi ethics and the Hindu way of life took place more intensely in the *khanqahs* of villages and small towns than in large urban centres, where Hindu and Muslim communal groups led a more self-centred and exclusive life, coming into contact with each other mainly because of their mutual economic and political needs. In short, the Muslim religious life was not governed simply by the laws of the *Shari'a*, although it was the basis of the external relations of the Muslims with God and the community (*umma*). The sufis considered the *Shari'a* to be the very starting point of spiritual life and adhered to its laws throughout their life, but turned the mechanics of meditation and contemplation into a more broadly based structure of piety and dutiful conduct towards God. The Qur'an offered sufis an inner and esoteric meaning over which they pondered ceaselessly, but they did not hesitate to benefit by the spiritual experience of the mystics of other religious communities in India, such as the Hindu sages and yogis.



The leading sufis were divided into three categories; firstly there were those who had inherited the *khanqah* life from their parents and who dedicated themselves to a life of meditation and contemplation in the tradition of their ancestors. Besides the descendants of the leading sufis, their attendants and dependants also belonged to this class. Not all of them were genuinely interested in the sufi life but remained attached to the *khanqahs* in order to enjoy the property and gifts which came their way. However, the number of those who were really interested in the sufi life was by no means insignificant.

The second category consisted of those sufis who in their early careers had held important positions in the judicial administration of the country, serving as *qazis*, *muftis* or teachers. Yet a third category were those successful businessmen and industrialists and an overwhelmingly large number of artisans who also adopted the *khanqah* life. According to hagiological reasoning, their decisions were prompted by a sudden, inexplicable mystic incentive, or by involvement in a successful or unsuccessful love affair. However, it would seem that generally their worldly environment had disgusted them and sufism offered them both an escape and mental stability. Although all sections of society, including the Emperor and the nobility, scrambled for the mediation of the sufis in attaining Divine grace, it was the merchant and artisan class, the peasants, labourers and petty soldiers who were the most deeply associated with the *khanqahs*. Once accustomed to the *khanqah* routine, the leading sufis rarely reverted to their former professions, the only known exception being Shaikh Wajihu'd-Din, the grandfather of Shah Waliu'llah. To the same *futuwwa* (chivalrous) tradition belonged the *jihad* leadership of Saiyid Ahmad Shahid. However, a large number of artisans and merchants continued to earn their livelihood from their professional activities, thereby injecting into them a more ethical awareness.

The sufi leaders developed their thought content within the framework of the traditions of their *silsilas* but the original thinking of many leading sufis gave rise to the splintering of branches within the *silsilas* themselves. For example, the rise of the Qadiriyyas in the Panjab and Sind considerably reduced the importance and popularity of the Suhrawardiyyas who generally received initiation into the Qadiriyya, and by the end of the eighteenth century the Chishtiyya centres in Bhawalpur and Multan regions had relegated the Suhrawardiyyas to a position of very secondary importance. Although from the eighteenth century onward the Shattariyyas in India are not known to have produced any leading *pirs*, their techniques of mystically invoking Divine names in order to acquire supernatural power were never forgotten, and the *Jawahir-i khamisa* of Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus inspired feelings at once sublime and awesome, not only in India but also in other Islamic countries.

Dedicating their whole being to the Absolute, the sufis achieved their



ethico-mystical goal through intuition and esoteric experience of the spiritual world. Theirs was naturally the antithesis of the intellectual experience fostered by the Muslim peripatetics such as Farabi and Avicenna. Farabi divided every existent thing into (1) the necessary being and (2) the possible Being, while Avicenna explained the above concepts on the basis of the law of causation and from the viewpoint of essence and existence. Considering the formal reasoning and intellectual process of Farabi and Avicenna as inadequate and misleading, Ibn 'Arabi, with his superhuman awareness of the mystic, argued that One and the many were in fact two subjective aspects of One Reality. Thus the Muslim peripatetics analysed the significance of *Wujud* (Being) metaphysically, while the sufis approached the same problem mystically. Accordingly, both the followers of the *Wahdat al-Wujud* and *Wahdat al-Shuhud* not only condemned the peripatetic philosophers and the *Mu'tazila* but were also opposed to the scholastic reasoning of the Ash'arite *kalam*.

The *Shuhudis* could not outrightly reject the *Wujudiyyas* but considered their vision of Reality as a preliminary experience in mystical progress. They called upon their followers not to be content with attaining the attractively easy level of the *Wujudiyya* experience, but to strive to reach the higher stage of mystical development contained in the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. Conversely the *Wujudiyyas*, who formed an overwhelming majority amongst the sufis, considered the *Shuhudiyya* mystical vision as only a very elementary stage of mystical development. They stressed the fact that the *Shuhudiyyas* misunderstood the *Wujudiyya* concept of Being which they used in the sense of Absolute and not in a limited, formal sense. In their attempt to reconcile the *Wahdat al-Wujud* with the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*, scholars such as Shah Waliu'llah tended finally to accept the superiority of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, arousing dissatisfaction among the leading exponents of the *Shuhudiyya* ideology, such as Shah Ghulam 'Ali Naqshbandi.

The effects of the *Wujudiyya* and the *Shuhudiyya* conflicts were not only felt in ideological spheres but had serious repercussions on the ethico-social world-view of their followers as well. The *Wujudiyyas* were unable to support the existing religious differences and disputes and did not object even to idol worship or polytheism, so long as the object of worship was God Himself. The *Shuhudiyyas*, on the other hand, did not hesitate to assert militantly the superiority of Sunnism, not only over Shi'ism but over all religious communities. To the *Shuhudiyyas*, Islam was not only the antithesis of Hinduism but could survive only at the expense of the latter. Conversely, the *Wujudiyyas*, despite the interest of some of their followers in converting Hindus to Islam, advocated the peaceful co-existence of both religions and the attainment of their religious and mystical goal through their own religious worship, prayers and spiritual exercises. There is no doubt that the degenerated form of the



*Wahdat al-Wujud* promoted antinomian tendencies and dissoluteness of morals; however, the degeneration of the *Shuhudiyyas* also dragged their followers down into a mire of bigotry and hypocrisy.

At no stage in the history of India did the *Shuhudiyya* Sunni puritanism and revivalist efforts succeed in reconciling themselves with the '*ulama*'. The Mujaddid's condemnation of the worldly '*ulama*' was not flattering to the '*ulama*' class as a whole and was palpably designed to assert the leadership of the *Shuhudiyya* sufis, some of whom were also trained '*alims*'. Both the '*ulama*' and the sufis remained estranged from each other, so much so that Aurangzib was forced by the '*ulama*' to ban the teachings of the letters of the Mujaddid, and the controversy over the *Maktubat* was hotly debated even in Mecca and Medina.

Although with the exception of the Naqshbandiyyas all sufi *silsilas* traced their origin from 'Ali, the fourth caliph of the Sunnis and the first Imam of the Shi'is, many pro-Mu'tazila elements in Shi'i beliefs and the Shi'i rejection of the first three successors of the Prophet had made the sufis hostile to the Shi'is. Nevertheless, such Shi'i leaders as Qazi Nuru'llah Shustari (956/1549-1019/1610) pleaded that reasoning and intuition were but two different gateways to knowledge and that the one did not necessarily repudiate the other. For example, the Qazi stated that Avicenna and Shaikh Abu Sa'id bin Abi'l Khair concluded their long intellectual debates, each making the following declarations:

Abu Sa'id, "Whatever he (Avicenna) knows (rationally), we sufis perceive (intuitively).

Avicenna, "Whatever he (Abu Sa'id) perceives (intuitively), we (philosophers) know (rationally)."

According to the Shi'is of Qazi Nuru'llah's school, sufis (except the Naqshbandiyyas) tracing their origin from the first caliph Abu Bakr were Shi'is, but did not declare their faith openly, observing *taqiya* (caution) under the threat of injury from the more powerful Sunnis. An interesting example quoted by the Qazi supporting this claim was the persecution of the Shi'is in the early years of Akbar's reign, when the Shi'i Mir Habash Turbati and Mirza Muqim Harawi were executed and Mulla Ghazali Mashhadi, fearing for his own life, rushed to seek the advice of Mulla Qasim Kahi. The latter advised Ghazali Mashhaddi to follow his own example and declare himself a *malamati* sufi.<sup>1</sup> Although many Shi'is in India and elsewhere observing *taqiya* called themselves sufis, the Qazi was criticized by Shi'is themselves for considering all eminent sufis, poets, philosophers and even the early 'Abbasid caliphs as Shi'is. However, efforts of the Sunnis in the eighteenth century to fight the steadily growing Shi'i political strength in India not only increased the intensity of Sunni-Shi'i polemics but also

<sup>1</sup>Qazi Nuru'llah Shustari, *Majalisu'l-mu'minin*, Tehran, 1299/1881-82, pp. 280-84.



created overt enmity between the Shi'i leaders and the sufis, particularly in Delhi and Awadh. Although Nizami is entirely wrong in assuming that Dildar 'Ali (1166/1752-53-1235/1819-20) provoked the anti-Shi'i polemics of Waliu'llah (1114/1703-1176/1762),<sup>1</sup> there is no doubt that at the end of the eighteenth century Dildar 'Ali and his followers enthusiastically spearheaded the anti-Sunni and anti-sufi movement, refuting the works of both Shah Waliu'llah and his son, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz. This led to a complete breakaway of the Shi'is of Lucknow and Delhi with sufism and its institutions.

The sufi leaders of the Shattariyya and Naqshbandiyya orders strove to dominate Mughal politics actively. The Shattariyya success over Emperor Humayun was complete but the Mujaddidiyya Naqshbandiyyas failed to introduce the traditions of Khwaja 'Ubaidu'llah Ahrar in India. Nevertheless, the failure of the Mujaddid and Khwaja Khawand Mahmud in contemporary politics does not mean, as Friedmann asserted, that Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi "was a sufi and not a thinker interested primarily in the relationships between religion and State and between Muslims and Hindus. The latter questions constituted only a peripheral element of his thought."<sup>2</sup> These conclusions derive from the author's failure to examine the Mujaddid's contributions against the background of Ahrarariyya traditions of influencing politics and rulers, as well as from an oversimplified conviction that further studies of Sirhindi should be made "against the background of Sufi thinkers such as 'Ibn al-Arabi and 'Ala' al-Dawlah al-Simnani, rather than that of the emperors Akbar, Jahangir, Aurangzib and their policies."<sup>3</sup> This suggestion amounts to completely divorcing historical personalities from their environment and examining them against a background of traditions completely different not only ideologically but also politically.

As we know, Ahmad Shah Durrani invaded the Panjab and Delhi—the latter twice. Firstly in 1757, when he sacked both Delhi and Mathura, and again in 1760-61, when he gained a decisive victory over the Marathas. However, these invasions were not prompted by Shah Waliu'llah's letter, as some modern scholars would have us believe.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, Shah Waliu'llah did offer a comprehensive political, social and ethical programme for the regeneration of the Sunnis of India. He was decidedly the greatest thinker of the eighteenth century Islamic world, but the framework of his political, social, mystic and religious thought had little

<sup>1</sup>Reply of K.A. Nizami on discussion of his paper Socio-Religious Movements in Indian Islam (1763-1898) in S.T. Lokhandwalla, *India and contemporary Islam*, Simla, 1971, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup>*Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi*, pp. 114-15.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, p. xiv.

<sup>4</sup>*Shah Waliu'llah Dihlawi ke Siyasi Maktubat*, pp. 18-22.



practical impact at the time and was cast in the traditional monarchical mould. No wonder that his son, Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz, following the example of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad who undertook the tuition of the children of the Jews for wages, did not see any harm in serving the British, as long as the Muslim government servants were not required to violate the laws of the *Shari'a*.<sup>1</sup> He did not see any distinction between the two situations, which were in fact completely different. The Prophet's companions belonged to the *Daru'l-Islam*, whilst Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz was living, as he himself declared, the *Daru'l-Harb*.

Despite their differences, in the nineteenth century both the sufis and the '*ulama*' strongly resisted the anti-Islamic Christian missionary preachings. Shah 'Abdu'l-'Aziz himself participated in a debate and is said to have worsted the Missionary leader.<sup>2</sup> Shah Muhammad Sulaiman Taunsaui was deeply distressed at the success of the Christian Missionary proselytizing activities and pleaded that death by starvation was preferable to service under the British, should it make inroads into the faith.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Hafiz Muhammad 'Ali of Khairabad was also exceedingly hostile to the growing British dominance.<sup>4</sup>

Several members of the leading *khanqahs* of Northern India took an active part in the rebellion of 1857-58 and, after the re-establishment of British rule, the *khanqah* establishments which had survived the eighteenth and nineteenth century political upheavals received a mortal blow through the new administrative policies of the government.

In his early career, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98), the great Muslim leader of the second half of the nineteenth century, was deeply interested in both sufism and Shi'i-Sunni polemics, but his modernist movement of founding a *kalam*, designed to reconcile the modern sciences with the articles of Islamic faith, had an unfavourable effect on sufi popularity, which was essentially due to the intuitive knowledge and miracles of the sufis. In his arguments, Sir Syed drew heavily upon the ideas of such sufis as Ghazali and Shah Waliu'llah and even benefited by the explanation of *wahi* given by Shaikh Muhibbu'llah of Allahabad in the *Taswiya*.<sup>5</sup> However, the overall results of his efforts on the Western educated Muslims was to estrange them from *khanqahs*, if not sufism itself.

The twentieth century modernist movement was directed at purging sufism of all its non-Islamic elements, particularly Hindu elements, sheltering under the umbrella of Islamic sufism. The latter tended to either ignore the non-Islamic influences or to gloss them over. A very interesting development was the new interpretation of the role of the sufis in the proselytization of Hindus. The sufis were now viewed as the counterparts

<sup>1</sup>*Fatawa-i 'Azizi*, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup>*Nafi'u's-salikin*, p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>*Manaqib-i Hafziyya*, p. 137.

<sup>5</sup>See Syed Ahmad Khan, *Tafsir al-Qur'an*, III, Lahore, 1880-95, pp. 14-18, 33-34.



of the nineteenth and twentieth century Christian missionaries, while the deep impact they had made in fostering the development of piety and godliness among the Muslims was completely ignored.

In 1915, Sir Muhammad Iqbal (1877/1938) published his *Asrar-i Khudi* (Secrets of the Self) condemning the popular sufi poet, Hafiz, of Shiraz (726/1325-6-717/1317) in a strongly emotive language. He wrote:

[ . . . Beware of Hafiz the drinker,  
His cup is full of the poison of death.  
His garment of abstinence is mortgaged to the cup-bearer.  
Wine is the remedy for the horror of the resurrection.  
There is nothing in his market except wine—  
With two cups his turban has been spoiled.  
He is a Muslim but his belief wears the thread of an unbeliever.  
The beloved's eyelashes make holes in his faith.  
His proposition is nothing but chit-chat.  
His hand is short as the date on the date trees.  
He is a sheep and he has learnt how to sing.  
He has learnt coquetry and whims and elegance.  
His fascination is poison and that's all,  
He gives weakness the name of strength,  
His musical instrument leads the nation astray.  
His congregation is not worthy for the pious ones,  
His cup is not suitable for the ingenious ones.  
Go independent of the congregation of Hafiz,  
Beware of sheep and beware.”<sup>1</sup>

This provoked a cry of disapproval against Iqbal. Pirzada Muzaffaru'd-Din Ahmad and Maulana Firuzu'd-Din Ahmad wrote *masnawis* replying to his criticism of Hafiz and Khwaja Hasan Nizami, the great Urdu prose writer and controller of Khwaja Nizamu'd-Din Auliya's *dargah* at Delhi, also joined the ranks of the opposition to Iqbal. However, Iqbal far-sightedly dropped the name of Hafiz from the second edition of the *Asrar-i Khudi*. His main aim was the propagation of the idea of the importance of self-realization and self-assertion of Muslims, both individually and nationally, and he did not wish to sacrifice this idea at the altar of a controversy over a minor point. Iqbal was not opposed to sufism as such but thought that Plato's theories of ideas and Ibn 'Arabi's *Wahdat al-Wujud* were a potent threat to the divine purpose relating to the creation of the honest and hard-working Muslims. The allegory of the Tiger and the Sheep<sup>2</sup> which Iqbal used to illustrate the immoral consequences of the acceptance of Plato's ideas was not a positive doctrine of violence

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Abu Sayeed Nur-ud-Din in his article, Attitude towards Sufism, *Iqbal, poet-philosopher of Pakistan*, New York and London, 1971, pp. 294-95.

<sup>2</sup>Nicholson, R. A., *The Secrets of the Self*, London, 1920, pp. 52-55.



and aggression, but was intended to teach the truth that the lack of interest in the present life would result in the inability to act, moral decay, and eventually death. He drew attention to the fact that "Life is of Time, and Time is of Life", and a correct understanding of Time offered us the power to create both Time and Life.<sup>1</sup> In the *Asrar-i Khudi*, as in his other poems, Iqbal blended the ideas of moral discipline of the early Sufi tradition with metaphysical knowledge characteristic of its later development.

Iqbal had studied both Ibn 'Arabi and the Mujaddid very thoroughly and the understanding of their respective philosophies was his life-long interest. In his old age he wrote a letter to Pir Saiyid Mihr Ali Shah Gularhwi, a disciple of Khwaja Shamsu'd-Din Siyalwi, saying:

"Last year I delivered a lecture on Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-i Sani in England. It was deeply appreciated by the perceptive minds there. I intend to visit England again and wish to deliver lectures on Hazrat Muhi'u'd-Din Ibn 'Arabi. This has induced me to seek clarifications on the following points.

1. What are the theories of Shaikh-i Akbar (Ibn 'Arabi) concerning the reality of Time and how far do they differ from the theories of *kalam*?
2. What works of Shaikh-i Akbar deal with these theories? I am seeking this information in order that I may study the question myself in the light of your reply.
3. I am also in need of the bibliographical references of the sufi works dealing with the above theories. The late Maulawi Saiyid Anwar Shah gave me a treatise of (Fakhru'd-Din) 'Iraqi, entitled *Darayat al-zaman*, briefly dealing with the problem of time. You might have read the work, this study whetted my appetite to learn more about the matter.

I hesitated to write to you for I had learnt that you had given up teaching disciples but since my main intention is to serve Islam, I hope that you will not mind the trouble of sending a reply."<sup>2</sup>

From his early career as a philosopher Iqbal had studied the problems relating to the conception of Time and expressed the problem both in his poems and lectures. For example, in the *Reconstruction of Religious thought* which deals with his ideas incisively, he wrote:

"The mystic's intimate association with the eternal which gives him a sense of the unreality of serial time does not mean a complete break with serial time. The mystic state in respect of its uniqueness remains in some way related to common experience. This is clear from the fact that the mystic state soon fades away, though it leaves a deep sense of

<sup>1</sup>Nicholson, R.A., *The Secrets of the self*, London, 1920, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup>*Iqbal-nama*, I, Lahore, n.d., pp. 443-44.



authority after it has passed away. Both the mystic and the prophet return to the normal levels of experience; but with this difference, that the return of the prophet, as I will show later, may be fraught with infinite meaning for mankind.<sup>1</sup>

In a verse he mystically summed up the situation as he saw it, saying:

*Na hai zaman na makan; la ila ill-Allah*

[Neither is there time nor space; No absolute existence but Allah.]

However, Iqbal believed that the most rational aspect of the God-man relationship was embodied in man's realization of his place in the scheme of creation. It was not possible through evanescence of the self, but by effectively understanding the importance of the concept of the relationship between the servant ('abd) and the Lord. Here is Iqbal's explanation put into the mouth of Hallaj, known to have declared ecstatically *Ana'l-Haqq* (I am the creative truth):

Before him the whole world bows prostrate,  
before him who called himself His servant.  
"His servant" surpasses your understanding  
because he is man, and at the same time essence.  
His essence is neither Arab nor non-Arab;  
he is a man, yet more ancient than man.  
"His servant" is the shaper of destinies,  
in him are deserts and flourishing cultivations;  
"His servant" both increases life and destroys it,  
"His servant" is both glass and heavy stone.  
"Servant" is one thing, "His servant" is another;  
we are all expectancy, he is the expectation.  
"His servant" is time, and time is of "His servant";  
we all are colour, he is without colour and scent.  
"His servant" had beginning, but has not end;  
what have our morn and eve to do with "His servant"?  
No man knows the secret of "His servant",  
"His servant" is naught but the secret of "save God".  
"Save God" is the sword whose edge is "His servant";  
do you want it plainer? Say, He is "His servant".  
"His servant" is the how and why of creation,  
"His servant" is the inward mystery of creation."<sup>2</sup>

Naturally Iqbal found the ideas of the Mujaddid more compatible with his own thoughts and philosophy. He once wrote to Khwaja Hasan Nizami:

"In a letter Hazrat Imam-i Rabbani (the Mujaddid) has discussed the

<sup>1</sup>Iqbal, M., *The reconstruction of religious thought in Islam*, reprint, Lahore, 1964, pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup>Arberry, A.J., *Javid-Nama*, London, 1966, p. 99.



respective merits of *gusistan* (to break off) and *paiwastan*<sup>1</sup> (to join or unite). I consider that the essence of Islam is *gusistan* and *paiwastan* amounts to *rahbaniyat* (monasticism) or Persian sufism . . . you may recall that you had once given me the title, *Sirru'l-wisal* (Secret of unity) but I had requested you to call me *sirru'l-firaq* (secret of separation). Even at that time the distinction made by Hazrat Mujaddid Alf-i Sani was in my mind.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus Iqbal's invitation to Muslims to follow the leadership of the Mujaddid was not only consistent with his religious and social philosophy but was the corner-stone of his ideas on Muslim dominance which, as he saw it, should be on a world-wide scale.

Quite different was the context in which Maulana Abu'l-Kalam Azad (1888-1958) proclaimed the Mujaddid a revolutionary who fearlessly uprooted the alleged heretical innovations of Akbar. The *Tazkira* or family history of his ancestors, with its references to other leading Islamic scholars of the past who had fearlessly fought against the persecution of the worldly '*ulama*' and the governing classes, was designed to inculcate piety and a fearless expression of truth in the Muslims. It was also intended to save the Muslims from blindly imitating the West and also from being misled by the uninformed criticisms of the traditional scholars, regarding the contributions of those whom Azad considered great reformers. The *Tazkira* was a manifesto of unremitting war against dogmatism and stubborn religious prejudices. It is significant that Abu'l-Kalam Azad's later views departed radically from the spirit of Islamic revivalism expressed in the *Tazkira*, which he wrote in the form of long notes around 1916, during his incarceration near Ranchi. However, some scholars of the Maulana Azad's *Jami'at-i 'Ulama'-i Hind* are not imbued with the liberalism of the Maulana. Although they joined the Indian National Congress to help achieve Indian independence, co-existence with the Hindus was furthest from their minds. For example, Maulana Muhammad Miyan, a leading organiser of the *Jami'at-i 'Ulama'-i Hind*, wrote the history of Indian '*ulama*' in several volumes, starting his first volume with the condemnation of the disastrous impact of the heretical policies of Akbar and Jahangir, and the glorification of the Mujaddid's reform. His views concerning his Hindu benefactors who tried to save him from going to jail in 1939 typify the attitude of the class Maulana Muhammad Miyan represents. He writes:

When the trial-proceedings were over, this humble self tried to present a small gift (some money) to Hirdai-Nara'in (Vakil, Secretary Bar Association Muradabad) but the affectionate and benevolent spirit of Hirdai Narain refused to accept. Angrily he said to me (the Miyan) that

<sup>1</sup>*Muktubat*, I, no. 147.

<sup>2</sup>*Ikram*, S.M., *Rud-i Kausar*, fourth edition, Lahore, 1968, p. 312,



perhaps I did not count him among my friends. I (the Miyan) was reminded of the following tradition of the Prophet Muhammad. "Human beings are also mines like gold and silver mines. Those who were good in the *jahiliyya* days (Arabia before the mission of the Prophet Muhammad) are also good in Islam provided that they are imbued with a true knowledge and perception of faith." I sincerely wish that such noble souls (as Hirdai Narain) should be endowed with the wealth of Islam [converted to Islam] so that they may be blessed with nobility both in this world and hereafter. May God grant this prayer as it is the sincere wish of this humble self, who considers Islam the only wealth worth possessing.<sup>1</sup>

The '*ulama*' in modern India are unable to accept the sufi ideal of a more liberal religious attitude and identify the spirit of sufism with the teachings of the Mujaddid alone. Some modernist Muslim scholars such as Nizami interpret the Mujaddid in much the same way as Muhammad Miyan and do not care to examine the ideological controversies in historical perspective.

The late nineteenth and the twentieth century also saw the dissemination of the teachings of Shah Waliu'llah in Egypt, Hijaz, Turkey and the Malay world. The most important personality acting as a sort of "clearing-house" of ideas was 'Ubaidu'llah Sindi (1872-1944), a revolutionary and scholar from Deoband. On 3 July 1933, Hajji Nak 'Abdu'llah (1900-1936), son of Hajji Wan Mustafa of Kelantan in Malaya, completed the study of Shah Waliu'llah's works under 'Ubaidu'llah Sindi and obtained from his teacher's a certificate stating that he had reached the level of *al-'Ulama' ar-Rasikhun* (a perfect '*alim*'). Like Shah Waliu'llah, Hajji Nik's father, Hajji Wan Mustafa who was in Mecca, saw the Prophet Muhammad in a dream on 10 December 1934. The Prophet had intimated that the Hajji's sons, through Shah Waliu'llah, had established a link with him and with his family and that they were expected "to fight to create a society inspired by the ideals of the Caliphate, for the strengthening of the spirit of justice and good works for all mankind throughout the world, as was laid down by Imam Shah Waliyullah al-Dihlawi in '*al-jaddat al-qawiyat al-Muhammadiyya*' (the mighty highway of Muhammad), to attain that which is desired by Allah." After his return to Kelantan in 1934, Hajji Nik 'Abdu'llah plunged himself into the task of teaching Shah Waliu'llah's works such as *Fauz al-kabir fi usul at-tafsir*; *al-Musawwa*; the *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*; and *al-Insaf fi bayan sabab al-ikhtilaf*. However, he was not destined to live for more than two years.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*'Ulama'-i Hind ka shandar mazi, jadid*, Delhi, n.d., pp. *be jim*.

<sup>2</sup>Theological Debates: Wan Musa bin Haji 'Abdu'l Samad and His Family, by Muhammad Sallah b. Wan Musa with S. Othman Kelantan in W.R. Roff, *Kelantan, religion, society and politics in a Malay State*, Kuala Lumpur, 1974, pp. 155-61.



Although Mustafa Kemal (Ataturk) had abolished the Ottoman sultanate in 1922 and the last Ottoman caliphate two years later, the mystical hope of reviving the caliphate never died in India, particularly in Deoband. There its luminaries, especially 'Ubaidu'llah Sindi, kept the memory green and prepared the Muslims in different parts of the Islamic world to establish the dominance of Islam throughout the whole world. Hajji Wan and his son, Hajji Nik, were but one example of the ideal in a world far from India.

The impact of modern scientific thought and twentieth century political developments in the sub-continent, however, have not been able to kill sufism, either there or in any other part of the world. The devotion to its outer aspects such as *zikr*, to the *baraka* associated with tombs and to sufi music has not waned. The richness and the range of the sufi message both in prose and poetry continue to arouse interest in knowledge, action and humanity. That message unfolds those universal aspects of Reality as all sages and saints of different religions, including Muslims, perceived them, and directs torn personalities and split minds to a more fruitful and ethical way of life. In the words of Iqbal, the epiphany of the Divine Majesty urges mankind as follows:

'Abandon the East, be not spellbound by the West,  
for all this ancient and new is not worth one barleycorn,  
That signet-ring which you gambled away to Ahriman  
should not be pledged even to trusty Gabriel.  
Life, that ornament of society, is guardian of itself;  
you who are of the caravan, travel alone, yet go with all !  
You have come forth brighter than the all-illumining sun ;  
so live, that you may irradiate every mote.  
Alexander, Darius, Qubad and Khusrau have departed  
like a blade of grass fallen in the path of the wind.  
So slender is your cup that the tavern has been put to shame ;  
seize a tumbler, and drink wisely, and so be gone !'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Javid-Nama, pp. 140-41.



## Appendix A

### Majzubs

No history of Sufism would be complete without an account of the *majzubs* or ecstasies who, ignoring all religious and social taboos, roamed about the streets of towns or in jungles. Many sufis, as mentioned earlier, lived in a state of ecstasy for shorter or longer periods, but some never regained mental stability. Just as there was no criterion by which to judge a true sufi or by which to distinguish him from a charlatan, so it was difficult to distinguish a *majzub* from a lunatic. In the popular mind the *majzubs* were supernatural beings who could perform incredible and varied miracles and both Hindus and Muslims were devoted to them. Generally the *majzubs* ignored their visitors, scolded, abused and even hurled stones and dust at them, but their devotees, in their fervour, endured and tolerated these eccentricities.

In the reign of the Lodis (855/1451-932/1526) the most prominent *majzub* was Shaikh Hasan, grandson of Shaikh Abu'l-'Ala. He and his ancestors originated from Rapri in Shikohabad (Mainpuri, U.P.). Shaikh Hasan used to wander through the streets of Delhi referring to Prince Nizam (Sultan Sikandar Lodi, 894/1489-923/1517), the son and successor of Sultan Bahlul Lodi (855/1451-894/1489), as his beloved. Such a scandalous suggestion was naturally shocking to Prince Nizam who, one day when Shaikh Hasan miraculously entered into the private chamber of the Prince, took the occasion to thrust the Shaikh's head into a furnace of burning charcoals. To the Prince's great astonishment, the Shaikh exhibited no signs of fear or injury. Suddenly, Mubarak Khan Nuhani, an important Afghan dignitary, entered the room and was shocked to find the Prince holding the Shaikh's head over the charcoals. Reprimanding Prince Nizam, Nuhani warned that no harm would befall the Shaikh, but that conversely, the Prince might incur divine wrath because of his reckless behaviour towards a distinguished sufi saint. The Prince replied that he could not tolerate the Shaikh's claim that he was his lover, to which the Miyan responded that the Prince should thank God that he was the beloved of such an eminent saint and proceeded to liberate the Shaikh from the Prince's hands. However, the Prince imprisoned the



Shaikh but he miraculously disappeared from the prison and was found dancing in the streets. Summoned back by the Prince and asked to explain why he ran away, the Shaikh replied that he had not left the jail of his own accord but that his grandfather, Shaikh Abu'l 'Ala' had taken him away. To the great surprise of all, upon examination, the cell was found to be bolted and the chains with which the Shaikh had been fastened, were lying on the ground.<sup>1</sup>

No more details of the life of Shaikh Hasan are available. One of his contemporaries was Shaikh 'Ala'u'd-Din Majzub, known as Shaikh 'Ala'u'l Bala'ul. For several years he lived in Samana but he later migrated to Agra where his miracles attracted large numbers of devotees to his side. Some of them used to give him slaves, both male and female, as gifts, and although the Shaikh was unmarried, his women slaves gave birth to his children. Shaikh Saifu'llah, the father of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, and Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi, the uncle of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, were deeply devoted to Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Balau'l, whose influence upon those two great religious dignitaries from Delhi is shown by the following two anecdotes.

Once, Shaikh Rizqu'llah was deeply upset because of the disappearance of one of his sons. Undecided as to whether he should give alms, recite the Qur'an or invoke one of the names of God as prescribed by the Shattariyyas, Shaikh Rizqu'llah visited Shaikh 'Ala'u'l who, upon seeing him, cried out spontaneously that the recitation of the Qur'an was the best of all remedies. Once Shaikh Rizqu'llah asked Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Balau'l to recommend some important mystical exercise and was told by the *Majzub* that both worldly and spiritual love alone could assure his mystical progress.

The second anecdote recounts how once Shaikh Saifu'llah told his son, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq, that he had been separated from one of his dear friends, Shaikh Saifu'llah was in Agra, his friend in Delhi. One night, the lovelorn Shaikh Saifu'llah dreamt that he and his friend were sitting with Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Balau'l. In his dream, Shaikh Saifu'llah caught hold of his friend's hands and, presenting him to Shaikh 'Ala'u'l, requested that the latter kiss them. Shaikh 'Ala'u'l told Shaikh Saifu'llah to kiss his beloved's hands himself, and blessed him. Early next morning Shaikh Saifu'llah visited Shaikh 'Ala'u'l whom he found standing at the door. As soon as Shaikh Saifu'llah approached, Shaikh 'Ala'u'l cried out that he should depart immediately and added: 'Khair Din, Khair Din.' Shaikh Saifu'llah immediately left for Delhi without taking any servants. On the way, he stayed at an inn called Sara'i Farah, where a gentleman

<sup>1</sup>Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi, *Waqi'at-i Mushtaqi*, British Museum MS., Rien 11, 802b, p. 24; AA, pp. 289-90; 'Abdu'llah, *Tarikh-i Dawudi*, Aligarh, 1954, pp. 27-28., Ahmad Yadgar, *Tarikh-i Shahi*, Calcutta, 1939, pp. 29-30.



introduced himself, giving his name as Khair Din. This man became the Shaikh's fellow-traveller. At yet another stage, a second Khair Din joined him on the journey to Delhi. The significance of Shaikh 'Ala'u'l's twice-uttered cry "Khair Din" now became clear to him. Obviously his two newly-found friends were meant to act as his guides. When Shaikh Saifu'llah arrived in Delhi, accompanied by the two Khair Dins, he was greeted most warmly by the young man he loved so dearly. Although we do not know what became of these two lovers, the utterances of Shaikh Saifu'llah as recorded by his own son, suggest that he always remained deeply in love, both in the worldly and in the spiritual sense.<sup>1</sup>

In Muharram 950/April 1543, Shaikh Mubarak Nagauri, immediately after reaching Agra from Gujarat, called upon Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Balau'l who advised him to settle down in Agra. Prophesying the birth of talented sons to him, Shaikh 'Ala'u'l-Balau'l warned Shaikh Mubarak that in the beginning, he would have many bitter disappointments because of the intrigues of his enemies, but that ultimately he would be crowned with success.<sup>2</sup> Shaikh 'Ala'u'l seems to have died some months later and not in 947/1540-41 as mentioned by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq.<sup>3</sup>

Another important *majzub* of Delhi was Shaikh Hasan Budla. He belonged to the family of an eminent citizen of Delhi, and generally wandered in the streets quite naked and was deeply interested in *sama'*. The gifts he obtained were immediately given by him to the *qawwals*. Some members of the '*ulama'*' saw him in their dreams helping the Prophet Muhammad perform ablutions. Some *hajjis* returning from Mecca went so far as to say that they had seen him in Ka'ba. He died around 964/1556-57.<sup>4</sup>

Many miraculous performances were also ascribed to Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Abdal of Delhi. He used to wander through the streets dancing and singing Hindi *dohas* which he composed extempore. According to Shaikh Rizqu'llah Mushtaqi, during his visit to Gujarat the people there discussed with him the activity of Shaikh 'Abdu'llah and his extempore Hindi *dohas* which he recited in the streets of Gujarat. They claimed that Shaikh 'Abdu'llah Abdal had always lived in Gujarat and that he had never been to Delhi. This filled Shaikh Rizqu'llah with surprise because Shaikh 'Abdu'llah was his relative and according to his own personal knowledge had never been out of Delhi.<sup>5</sup>

Baba Kapur *majzub* who died in 979/1571-72 came from Kalpi but later settled in Gwalior. In the earlier stages of his career as a mystic he used to perform rigorous ascetic exercises, and helped the poor and weak—particularly the old women whose vessels he filled with water by

<sup>1</sup>AA, pp. 288-289.

<sup>2</sup>*Gulzar-i abrar*, Manchester MS., ff. 162a-b; RIH, p. 82.

<sup>3</sup>AA, p. 289.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, p. 290.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, pp. 290-91.



night. When finally he entered a permanent state of ecstasy, he retired to Gwalior. For days on end he would eat nothing and would roam the streets either naked or with only a lion-cloth to cover the private parts of his body. His devotees would present him with expensive garments but he always gave them to other people.<sup>1</sup>

In Ajmer, there lived Bayan *majzub* who spent most of his time in the vicinity of the tomb of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti. It is said that before his accession to the throne, Bahadur Shah of Gujarat (932/1526-943/1537) visited Ajmer, which was then ruled by the Rajputs who had gone to the extent of converting the tomb into an idol temple. Bahadur took a vow that if he were to succeed to the throne, he would take revenge upon the infidels and reduce them to miserable circumstances. Miyan Bayan who was present at the time instantly ordered his slave girl to arrange for a high throne for the sea-bird, meaning Bahadur. The Prince's claims to the Gujarat throne were strongly contested by his rivals. However, considering Bayan's symbolic gesture as a prophecy of his success in acceding to the Gujarat sultanate, he immediately returned to Gujarat and soon became its ruler. Shortly afterwards he invaded the Rajputs and shattered their power.<sup>2</sup>

Another *majzub*, Illah-Din of Narnaul, also used to wander in the town's bazaar. His habits were most peculiar. He would often sit down in a certain spot and not stir from that place for several days. He was also in the habit of talking to himself. Clad in old and torn garments, he used to wear iron rings on his feet and legs. Talking to anyone who passed by, he invariably uttered the following words: "O God come! O God go! O God sit down!"

At one end of the bazaar, there were some wooden stocks set-up for prisoners. Whenever he found any prisoner with his legs in the fetters, he would set him free and put his own legs in instead. He would also stand motionless in the garbage dump for hours. He died on 15 Sha'ban 964/13 June 1557.<sup>3</sup>

Shah Mansur, another *majzub*, lived in Mandu. When the Mughal emperor Humayun marched against Gujarat, he ordered one of his servants to go to the Shah and to try to draw any auspicious message he could from his speech or actions. When the Emperor's messenger met Shah Mansur, the latter removed an arrow from the messenger's quiver, tore off its feathers and replaced it. The Emperor, hearing this, remarked that the Shah's action implied that he would be defeated, his army shattered, but that he himself would be able to return safely. This is in fact precisely what happened.<sup>4</sup>

At Lahore there were also some famous *majzubs*. One of them was

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 291.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, pp. 292-93.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, pp. 291-92.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, pp. 293-94.



Miyan Mungar,<sup>1</sup> another was Shaikh Yusuf.<sup>2</sup> The latter was tall of stature and a solidly built man. He shaved his head and wore a huge turban. He was very famous for his prophecies which invariably came true.

Two *majzubs* who migrated to India in different sets of circumstances left an indelible mark upon the history of sufism and Persian poetry in India. One of them was Bahram Saqqa, the other Sarmad.

Bahram Saqqa's name was Shah Birdi Bayat and he was the elder brother of Bayazid Bayat,<sup>3</sup> who compiled invaluable notes on the later period of the history of Humayun and the early years of the reign of Akbar, now published under the title *Tazkira-i Humayun wa Akbar*, Birdi Bayat held a high position under Humayun's brother, Kamran, and from his headquarters at Gardiz, some fifty miles east of Ghazni, controlled the route between Ghazni and Qandahar.<sup>4</sup> In Ramazan 952/November 1545, Kabul was seized by one of Humayun's officers and, on the Emperor's arrival, festivities were arranged on a grand scale. The occasion was of great significance, for the young Akbar (b. 14 Sha'ban 949/23 November 1542), who was separated from his father and mother during their flight from Qandahar to Iran in November 1543, was re-united with them.

In March 1546 the festivities of Akbar's circumcision also took place. The celebrations and rejoicings, however, brought about a mysterious change over Shah Birdi who, with Bayazid Bayat, was then in Kabul. Shah Birdi became an ecstatic, resigned his military career and began to supply free water to the people, assuming the name of Bahram Saqqa (water-carrier) as his nom-de-plume.<sup>5</sup> Bayazid, however, began to serve under the nobles of Humayun. He did not accompany Humayun on his campaign for the re-conquest of India but reached Lahore in Shawwal 967/July 1560 with Mun'im Khan, Akbar's governor of Kabul, under whom he was serving. Bahram Saqqa also seems to have accompanied his brother and began to live in the precincts of the tomb of Shaikh Nizamu'd-Din Auliya', and to participate in *sama'* assemblies. In Delhi also, Bahram Saqqa devoted his leisure time to providing water and used to write poetry while in a state of ecstasy.<sup>6</sup>

A year later, accompanied by his brother, Bahram Saqqa settled in Agra, where he built a house for the distribution of water, as did one of his disciples. Akbar, marching out of his palace, used to sit down in the Bahram's *saqqa-khana*, drink water and listen to the poetry Bahram had written.<sup>7</sup> Bahram, however, did not stay in Agra for long and, according to Bada'uni, set forth alone and destitute for Ceylon and died at some

<sup>1</sup>AA, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, p. 294.

<sup>3</sup>RIM, pp. 108-9, 242-48.

<sup>4</sup>Bayazid Biyat, *Tadhkira-i Humayun wa Akbar*, Calcutta, 1941, pp. 47-48.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, pp. 54-55.

<sup>6</sup>ibid, pp. 234-35.

<sup>7</sup>ibid, pp. 242-43.



unknown place. It would seem though that Bada'uni did not know that from Ceylon Bahram reached Bengal, which at that time had still not been conquered by the Mughals, and died at Bardawan in 970/1562-63. His tomb became a very important pilgrimage centre. According to Bada'uni, Bahram wrote several *diwans* but, overcome by ecstasy, he used to wash away the ink from the paper. However, a large part had survived even in Bada'uni's time and a copy is still available in the Asiatic Society of Bengal. Besides being impregnated with sufic symbols, his verses exuberantly extol the eminence of 'Ali and his descendant. Nevertheless, he did not forget to condemn the Shi'is. Here are Bada'uni's selections, as translated by W. Haig:

I am thrown into bewilderment each time I regard the mole on His  
cheek,  
I distractedly encompass that spot like the leg of a pair of compasses  
tracing a circle around its centre.  
I distraught as I am, have withdrawn my gaze from fair creatures for  
this reason,  
That I have in the nest of my heart a Friend of my soul like Thee.  
I have broken the foundations of austerity that I might see what would  
come to pass,  
I have sat in the market-place of ignominy, that I might see what  
would come to pass.  
I see my poor mad heart distracted with the love of Thy face,  
I see it encompassed on every side with the chains of Thy locks.  
This day from weeping am I plunged in my heart's blood,  
Ah, heart! cause not my head to burst this day with weeping.  
The love of that beloved one with garments like the rose has again  
grasped me by the collar,  
Ah, now, at last, it has rent my garment from collar to skirt.<sup>1</sup>

The most famous among the *majzubs*, however, was Muhammad Sa'id Sarmad. He was an Armenian Jew who came from Kashan, an important centre of ceramics and trade in Iran, halfway between Tehran and Isfahan. In Iran he sat at the feet of the greatest scholars of philosophy, such as Sadru'd-Din Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Shirazi, commonly known as Mulla Sadra (d. 1050/1640-1), and his contemporary Mir Abu'l Qasim-i Findarski.<sup>2</sup>

The influence of his teachers prompted Sarmad to embrace Islam but his grounding in Jewish scholarly traditions was very deep and he was

<sup>1</sup>*Muntakhathu't-tawarikh*, English translation by W. Haig, III, pp. 338-40.

<sup>2</sup>According to the *Dabistan-i mazahib*, the Mulla had become a sun worshipper and had also adopted the creed of abstaining from cruelty to living creatures. Despite owning considerable wealth, he did not go on pilgrimage for he was not prepared to ceremoniously kill a lamb whilst there. *Dabistan-i mazahib*, p. 55.



strongly imbued with the traditions of the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* and the *Wahdat al-Wujud*.

Sarmad earned his living as a merchant and due to the lucrative trade between Iran and India, amassed a considerable fortune. In 1042/1632-33 he visited Thatta, where he fell violently in love with a Hindu boy of the Vaishya caste, Abhai Chand by name. The parents of the boy, however, concealed him, which frustrated Sarmad so deeply that he began to wander naked like a lunatic. In his ecstasy, he recited the following verse :

“I know not if in this spherical old monastery (world)  
My God is Abhai Chand or someone else.”

After some months, the parents of the boy were convinced that Sarmad's intentions were honourable and they allowed the boy to live with him. Abhai Chand himself also seems to have been something of a prodigy, for he read the Book of Moses, the Psalms of David and other classical literature of the Jews. He gained high proficiency in Persian and began to compose Persian verse. For instance, he wrote—

“I submit to the Furqan (the Qur'an), the Pentateuch,  
I am a priest, I am a *ruhban* (Christian monk).  
I am a *rabbi* of the Jew, I am an infidel, I am a Muslim.”<sup>1</sup>

Abhai Chand also translated part of the Book of Moses which Sarmad revised for the use of the author of the *Dabistan-i Mazahib*.

In 1044/1634-35, Sarmad went to Lahore and from thence to Hyderabad, where he met the author of the *Dabistan-i Mazahib* in 1057/1647-8. Both at Lahore and Hyderabad, Sarmad attracted a considerable number of admirers. In Hyderabad, Sultan 'Abdu'llah Qutb Shah's Prime Minister, Shaikh Muhammad Khan, frequently called on Sarmad. The Irani merchants living in Hyderabad were also devoted to him. Among them was Mir Muhammad Sa'id Mir Jumla<sup>2</sup> (d. April 1663) who subsequently became a Minister in the government of Hyderabad and who latter was a favourite of Prince Aurangzib. Sarmad had prophesied that Mir Jumla was destined to obtain a very distinguished post.

Around 1654, Sarmad reached Delhi, where Dara-Shukoh became his devotee. A letter written by Dara to Sarmad and the latter's reply have been published. Dara wrote :

‘My *pir* and *murshid*.

Everyday I decided to see you but I am not successful. If I be I, what

<sup>1</sup>*Dabistan-i mazahib*, p. 242; 'Ali Quli Khan Walih Daghistani, *Riyazu'sh-shu'ara*, Lucknow University MS., f. 172; 'Abdu'l-Wali, A Sketch of the life of Sarmad, *JASB*, 1924, pp. 112-13.

<sup>2</sup>See Sarkar, J.N., *The Life of Mir Jumla*, Calcutta, 1951.



is the reason for this postponement ? If I be not I, it is none of my fault. If the murder of Imam Husain took place because of Divine will, who was Yazid (who gave the order for the murder) to intervene in the Divine will ? If it was not Divine will, how can the following verse be explained : 'God does whatever he wills, and commands whatever he intends'. The most perfect among all prophets (Muhammad), (once) went to fight the infidels but the Muslim army was defeated. The exoteric 'ulama' suggest that the defeat was designed to teach resignation. (How can be explain) the necessity of education to a most perfect personality ?<sup>1</sup>

Sarmad wrote only a line in reply :

"My dear,

We have forgotten all that we had read save the story of the Friend which we repeat."

Sarmad never wore any clothes. Both Bernier<sup>2</sup> and Manucci saw him roaming naked in Delhi. Manucci wrote :

"This man (Sarmad) always went naked, except when he appeared in the presence of the prince, when he contented himself with a piece of cloth at his waist."<sup>3</sup> According to the author of the *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, Sarmad used to say that among the Israelites, the concealing of the private parts of the body was not compulsory and that in his last days, the Prophet Isaiah himself used to go naked.<sup>4</sup>

Here are some *ruba'is* of Sarmad :

Sarmad, whom they intoxicated from the cup of love,  
Whom they called, exalted, and depressed,  
Asked for wine, worship of God, and wisdom,  
(But) they intoxicated him, and made him a worshipper of idols.<sup>5</sup>

Talk not about Ka'ba and temple with everyone,  
And in the valley of doubt walk not like deviated ones.  
Learn the form of worship from Satan himself !  
Take only One as the object of worship, bend not before any other.

He does not live only in the temple and the mosque,  
But all the heavens and earth are His abode.

<sup>1</sup>The reference is to the Prophet Muhammad's defeat by the Meccans who invaded Medina in 3/624 to avenge their defeat sustained a year earlier at Badr. This battle was fought at the foot of the hill of Uhud near Medina. Not only was the Prophet Muhammad himself severely wounded, but his uncle Hamza bin 'Abdu'l-Muttalib was killed by the enemy.

<sup>2</sup>Bernier, F., *Travels in the Mogol Empire*, tr. on the basis of Irving Brock's version by A. Constable, 2nd revised ed. by V.A. Smith, London, 1916, p. 317.

<sup>3</sup>Manucci, N., *Storia do Mogor*, tr. W. Irvine, I, London, 1907, p. 223.

<sup>4</sup>*Dabistan-i mazahib*, pp. 242-43.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, p. 243.



The whole universe is gone mad about His name!  
Yes, wise is one who is lost in Him.<sup>1</sup>

Below is a *rubā'i* in praise of the Prophet Muhammad:

O thou, by whose cheek is wounded the mind of the red rose,  
Internally is the whole blood of the heart, externally the red rose:  
Thou camest so late after Joseph, who was in the garden expecting thee,  
That the rose (of his cheek) became first yellow (from vexation) and at last (from pleasure) a red rose.<sup>2</sup>

The following *rubā'i* written by Sarmad was, according to Sher Khan Lodi, evidence of Sarmad's disbelief in the Prophet Muhammad's *mi'raj*.

He who obtained esoteric perception,  
Became more expanded than the expanded heavens,  
The mullas say that Ahmad went up to heaven,  
Sarmad says that heaven came down into Ahmad.<sup>3</sup>

After the execution of Dara-Shukoh, Aurangzib, in his bid to weed out Dara-Shukoh's influential sympathizers, executed Sarmad on a charge of nudity. Sher Khan Lodi says that when Sarmad was taken to the place of execution, the executioner proceeded to cover Sarmad's eyes, but the latter, preventing the executioner from doing so, cast a glance at him and said, smiling: "Come in whatever garb you choose, I recognise you well", and recited the following verses:

"There was an uproar and we opened our eyes from the eternal sleep.  
Saw that the night of wickedness endured, so slept again  
You have seen kings, dervishes and qalandars,  
Come, see the intoxicated Sarmad in his wretched condition."

Many legendary anecdotes are told by later authorities about the fearless replies of Sarmad to his persecutors. It is said that Aurangzib deputed his favourite *Sadr*, Mulla 'Abdu'l-Qawi, to make enquiries into charges against Sarmad. 'Abdu'l-Qawi ordered Sarmad to conceal his private parts but the latter simply said: *Shaitan qawi ast*. The sentence is ambiguous, meaning either that the Devil is powerful, or that (Mulla) 'Abdu'l-Qawi was a devil. The enraged *Sadr*, naturally, managed to have a sentence passed against Sarmad.<sup>4</sup>

According to another anecdote, the Board of the qazis, presided over by the Emperor himself, asked Sarmad to explain why he did not recite the full *kalima* instead of only its negative part—*La Ilaha*. (There is no

<sup>1</sup>Asiri, F.M., *Rubā'iyat-i Sarmad*, Shantiniketan, 1950, no. 249.

<sup>2</sup>*Dabistan-i mazahib*, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup>*Mir'atu'l-khayal*, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup>*Ma'asiru'l-umara'*, I, p. 226.



God). Sarmad replied that he was so deeply engrossed in its first part that he had no time to think over the latter part, *illa'llah* (but God). Another anecdote asserts that after the execution of Sarmad, his severed head recited the full *kalima*.<sup>1</sup>

Mythical stories were also associated with Sarmad's *rubai's* and both in the history of sufism and in the popular Muslim mind Sarmad came to occupy the same revered status as was held by Hallaj. Rightly did one of his verses earlier prophesy:

A long time since the fame of Mansur became an ancient relic.

I will exhibit with my head the gallow and cord.

In 1071/1660-61 he was executed near the Jami' mosque in Delhi and was buried to the north-east of the building. The importance of his grave as a centre of pilgrimage has not waned up to this day.

<sup>1</sup>Riyazu'sh-shu'ara, f. 127a.



## Appendix B

### Female Sufis

NOT much is known about the female sufis who flourished from the sixteenth century onwards. However, the saintly mothers of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Haqq Muhaddis Dihlawi, Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, and Miyan Mir played an important role in making their sons great sufis. Before the death of Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah, the Mujaddid, in obedience to his *pir*'s wishes, is known to have exercised his spiritual influence upon Khwaja's two wives.

According to Dara-Shukoh, Bibi-Jamal Khatun, the younger sister of Miyan-Mir, was the Rabi'a of her times. She obtained her early training in sufism from her parents and then Miyan-Mir, who had settled in Lahore, through his younger brother Qazi Tahir, conveyed th Bibi-Jamal his own Qadiriyya methods of meditation and contemplation.

Throughout her life, Bibi-Jamal lived in Siwistan. Complying with the rules of Shari'a, she married, but Dara-Shukoh has not recorded her husband's name. After ten years of married life, she separated from her husband and began to lead a life given to prayer, meditation and difficult ascetic exercises. Miyan-Mir frequently referred to her exercises when talking to his disciples. According to Dara-Shukoh, Bibi-Jamal learnt of the death of Miyan-Mir by miraculous means and she offered prayers for the peace of her brother's soul. Dara-Shukoh also relates many anecdotes denoting Bibi-Jamal's miraculous achievements. She died on 27 Rabi' I 1057/2 May 1647.<sup>1</sup>

Mulla-Shah considered Dara-Shukoh's elder sister, Jahan-Ara Begam, or Begam Sahiba (even Begam Sahib is used by contemporary historians), or Padshah Begam, as a sufi and, as mentioned earlier, had initiated her into the Qadiriyya order. She was born on 21 Safar 1023/2 April 1614 and was one year older than her brother, Dara-Shukoh. She dearly loved her father and brother, with whom she shared a passionate love for sufism. According to her own statement, she was the first woman in the house of Timur to take an interest in sufism and remained steadfast in her belief in it. Originally she was interested in the Chishtiyya *silsila* and in 1049/

<sup>1</sup>*Sakinatu'l-auliya'*, pp. 129-31; Abdul-Hamid Lahawri, *Badshah-nama*, I, p. 1178; Muhammad Salih Kamboh, *Amal-i Salih*, I, p. 80.



1639-40 completed a biography of Khwaja Mu'inu'd-Din Chishti with notices of some of his disciples. The work was entitled *Munishu'l-arwah*, but after her initiation into the Qadiriyya order in 1050/1640-41, on 27 Ramazan 1051/30 December 1641, she completed an account of Mulla Shah, entitled the *Sahibiyya*.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of her mother, Mumtaz Mahall (17 Zu'lqa'da 1040/17 June 1631) Jahan-Ara made the care of her father her own life mission. This prompted many European contemporaries to accuse her wrongly of having incestuous relations with him.<sup>2</sup> Like her father, she also doted on Dara-Shukoh and before his defeat at Samugarh tried to persuade Aurangzib to surrender to her brother. Even after Dara-Shukoh's defeat, she tried to obtain favourable terms for him but failed.

From the time Shahjahan was imprisoned by Aurangzib in Agra fort in Ramazan 1068/June 1658 until the unfortunate Emperor's death in captivity on 26 Rajab 1076/1 February 1666, Jahan-Ara devoted herself to the care and comfort of her father. After Dara's death, she also urged Aurangzib to exhibit a more reasonable attitude towards Mulla Shah and continually strived to reduce Shahjahan's bitterness towards Aurangzib. After Shahjahan's death she began to live with Aurangzib and until her own death in Ramazan 1092/September 1681, gave wise counsel to the Emperor. Throughout her life, Jahan-Ara remained celibate.

<sup>1</sup>*Oriental College Magazine* XIII, 4 August, 1937, pp. 3-19.

<sup>2</sup>Bernier, F., *Travels in the Mogol Empire*, p. 12; N. Manucci, *Storia do Mogor*, A. pp. 217-220.



## Appendix C

### The Letters of the Mujaddid's Descendants to Aurangzib, His Family Members and Nobles

IN keeping with the practice of the Mujaddid, his descendants were also keen to establish contacts with the rulers, their family members and high officials, but the Qadiriyya and Dara-Shukoh's influence over Shahjahan gave them no opportunity to do so. As mentioned earlier, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum had written a letter to Aurangzib in 1652 when he was appointed by Shahjahan to seize Qandahar.<sup>1</sup>

Although according to sufi beliefs Aurangzib's war against Qandahar was inferior compared to the superior battle against the carnal self, the Shaikh considered it a *jihad fi sabili'llah* (jihad in God's service), for it was against the Shi'is, and he deeply lamented his own inability to join Aurangzib in battle. He assured the Prince of his blessings, however, reminding him that, like all the fundamental duties of Islam such as prayers and fasting, the *jihad* should also be performed with the following verse in mind:

But ah! thou soul at peace!

Return unto thy Lord, content in his good pleasure!<sup>2</sup>

The Shaikh emphasized the fact that perfect faith and true Islam, nay the goal of sufism itself, lay in the understanding and practice of the command given in the above verse.<sup>3</sup>

Around 1065/1655, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id wrote that in those days of the decline of Islam, the only hope of its practices being strengthened, and of the *Shari'a* being glorified, rested in Aurangzib. It was consequently imperative for Muslims in general, and for sufis in particular, to pray for the welfare of the Prince. He hoped that his own selfless prayers would be accepted by God. He added that he had heard the Prince had been making preparations to annihilate the people [ruler] of Golkonda

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>*Qur'an*, lxxxix, 22, 23.

<sup>3</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, *Maktubat-i Ma'sumiyya*, I, Karachi, 1976, no. 64, 179-83.



who had become disloyal and had broken their previous agreements. Accordingly, he and other holy men had plunged themselves into prayer for the success of the Prince, and it was sincerely hoped that, according to the Divine promise made in the following verse, the Prince would come out victorious and the sinful innovators (*ahl-i bid'a*) would be destroyed.

### Verse

Lo! As for those who sunder their religion and become schismatics, no concern at all hast thou with them.<sup>1</sup>

He concluded the letter with the note that only chronic illness in conjunction with the lack of travel expenses prevented him from personally participating in that *jihad*.<sup>2</sup>

In another letter, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id informed the Prince that in fulfilment of their long-cherished desire to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca, he, accompanied by Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Shaikh Muhammad Yahya and a party of dervishes had reached Sironj. After visiting the holy places they would continue praying for the welfare of the Prince, on whom they believed the glory of Islam depended.<sup>3</sup>

(After the accession of Aurangzib to the throne, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum and their brothers and sons were naturally filled with high hopes for the consummation of the Mujaddid's political programme. They wrote letters urging the Emperor to root out *bid'a*, glorify the puritanically orthodox Sunni practices, and to eliminate from them all sinful innovations. Important military victories over the Shi'is or Hindus provided them with opportunities to congratulate the Emperor on his success, and to remind him that the unorthodox Sunni practices which still endured should be eliminated. They were also interested in eliciting maximum support from the imperial family and the nobility for the promotion of the political, social and religious projects of the Mujaddid. Despite the support of the Emperor, of some of his family members and a section of the nobility, it was an uphill task fighting against the opposition of an important section of the 'ulama' and sufis, whose hostility to the Mujaddid's teachings had been mounting since the Mujaddid's own times.)

(In his first letter to Aurangzib after he had become Emperor, Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum pointed out that, despite Aurangzib's commitment to worldly duties, his soul was at peace with God, and this would lead to him becoming a great sufi.<sup>4</sup> In another letter the Shaikh, thanking God for the peace and glorification of the Islamic practices which prevailed

<sup>1</sup>*Qur'an*, VII, 160.

<sup>2</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, *Maktubat-i Sa'id'iyya*, Lahore, 1385/1965, no. 82, p. 143.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, no. 84, p. 145.

<sup>4</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, *Maktubat-i Ma'sumiyya*, II, Karachi, 1976, no. 5, p. 30.



during Aurangzib's reign, prayed for the Emperor's long life.<sup>1</sup> Since the Shaikh had deputed his son Saifu'd-Din to Aurangzib's court, he did not think it essential to persistently urge the Emperor to strengthen orthodox Sunnism. He did not fail, however, to express satisfaction at the contributions which his son had been able to make towards the Emperor's spiritual development.)

(Seven of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id's letters were written after Aurangzib's accession to the throne. Letter No. 37, for example, written after February 1659, says that after Aurangzib's accession, infidelity and aberration had been eliminated, and the foundations of heresy and sinful innovations had been totally effaced. The letter suggests that it still remained to prohibit unlawful practices and the use of intoxicants. It adds that the issuing of orders for rebuilding the delapidated mosques, for rehabilitating the deserted seminaries, for offering stipends to the 'ulama' and religious scholars, and for paying due respect to the ascetics and pious men, would contribute greatly to strengthening the pillars of the *Shari'a*.<sup>2</sup>)

Letter No. 40 expresses thanks to God for making the Islamic [Mughal] army victorious, for the demolition of the pillars of infidelity and *bid'a* and for the elimination of heretical practices and impiety. It also urges the Emperor to issue *farmans* to his officers throughout the empire to promote the laws of the *Shari'a*, to accord due respect to the godly 'ulama' and pious men, and to take an active, personal interest in looking after his subjects, especially the poor, and the oppressed.<sup>3</sup>

Letter No. 45 acknowledges Aurangzib's letters and asserts that, as the Emperor's whole-hearted efforts were concentrated on the promotion of the laws of the *Shari'a*, the eradication of the *bid'a* and sinful innovations, it was imperative for dervishes like him to pray most sincerely for the Emperor's safety and success. He hoped that as his prayers were in reality meant for the welfare of all people, they would be accepted by God. The letter then goes on to quote *ahadis* from the Prophet Muhammad relating to the merits accruing from the promotion of justice, piety, and from the study of religious sciences, as well as from patronising the 'ulama'. It seeks the Emperor's prayers for the writer's spiritual development, adding that God did not reject the prayers of those who were fasting, the oppressed, and the *imam-i 'adil* (the just ruler).<sup>4</sup>

Letter No. 66 says that as a *jihad* against the perdition damned people practising *bid'a* (i.e. the Shi'is) was being contemplated, he was reproducing some *ahadis* describing the virtues of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad. He asserts that the above sect was excluded from Islam. A war against those who did not piously follow the companions of the

<sup>1</sup>Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, *Maktubat-i Ma'sumiyya*, III, Karachi, 1976, no. 6, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup>*Maktubat-i Sa'idiyya*, no. 37, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid.* no. 40, p. 95.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid.* no. 45, p. 101.



Prophet Muhammad and had made taunts and curses against them as a tenet of their faith, was imperative and superior to many forms of worship.<sup>1</sup> However, his death early in Aurangzib's reign deprived him of witnessing the discriminatory laws against the Hindus, other puritanical legislations, the imposition of *jizya*, and the war against the Rajputs, the Shi'i states of the Deccan, and against the Marathas.

The Mujaddidiyya-Naqshbandiyya reaction to those problems are reflected in the letters of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din, Hujjatu'llah Muhammad Naqshband and Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah. The *Maktubat-i Saifiyya* comprising a collection of Shaikh Saifu'd-Din's letters contains 19 letters to Aurangzib, 11 to Roshan Rai (Roshan Ara) Begam, 3 to Prince Mu'azzam, 1 to Prince A'zam, 15 to Sultan 'Abdu'r Rahman b. Nazair Muhammad Khan, the ruler of Balkh, 6 letters to Muhtashim Khan, 3 to Mukarram Khan, and 1 to Bakhtawar Khan.

*Wasilatu'l-qubul*, the collection of 128 of Hujjatu'llah's letters in the first, and 68 in the second volume, also contains letters to the Emperor and his nobles. A considerable number of letters have no names of addressees; however, there are 15 letters addressed to Aurangzib, 1 to Princess Zibu'n-Nisa, 2 to Sha'ista Khan, 1 to Qazi Shaikhu'l-Islam, 1 to Mukarram Khan, 1 to Aqil Khan, 1 to Saif Khan, 1 to Mustafa Khan, 1 to Mirza Mirak, 1 to Mughal Khan, and 2 to anonymous Khans.

The *Khazinatu'l-ma'arif*, consisting of 156 letters by Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah, contains 9 letters to Aurangzib and 3 to Jumlatu'l-Mulk Ja'far Khan, as well as 2 to Mukarram Khan. The *Gulshan-i Wahdat*, a collection of 118 letters by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad Wahdat, son of Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id, contains three letters—one to Zibu'n-Nisa, one to Farrukhsiyar, and one to Saif Khan.

It would seem that Aurangzib obtained initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order some days before the death of Shahjahan (26 Rajab 1076/1 February 1666), through the intervention of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum. Both the Shaikh and his son, Saifu'd-Din, were then present in Delhi. Shaikh Saifu'd-Din resided in the house of one 'Abdu'r-Rahman Sultan and, according to the Shaikh, a huge crowd scrambled for initiation into the Naqshbandiyya order. Shaikh Saifu'd-Din stayed at the court to help perfect the Emperor in the Naqshbandiyya mystical discipline.<sup>2</sup> However, two other objectives made him stay at the Court; firstly, his desire to help the needy, and secondly, he wished to promote the *sunna* and to debilitate the sinful innovators (Shi'is)—something he thought would be impossible in those days, without the help of the rulers.<sup>3</sup> In a letter to his father, the Shaikh wrote that he had informed

<sup>1</sup>*Maktubat-i Sa'idiyya*, no. 66, pp. 122-23.

<sup>2</sup>Muhammad A'zam, *Maktubat-i Saifiyya*, Hyderabad, Sind, n.d., no. 83, pp. 123-24.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, no. 161, to the Emperor, pp. 187-88.



the Emperor that he associated with him mainly in order to help the oppressed. He added that because of his efforts a cruel *pargana* officer, 'Abdu'r-Rasul was dismissed.<sup>1</sup> In a letter to the Emperor he once complained that the drummers had made his life miserable and he could not move out, even for Friday prayers, without the utmost difficulty. (Probably they played music very loudly.) He consequently requested the Emperor to order Faulad Khan (kotwal) to take some of them into captivity and to exile others. He also added that a considerable number of sinful innovators had become his enemies and had made his life difficult. It would seem that to satisfy the persistent complaints of the 'ulama' and the orthodox Naqshbandiyyas, the Emperor banned the playing of music in 1079/1669.

Besides the Emperor, Shaikh Saifu'd-Din considered Roshan Ara, who had a great influence over the Emperor, as his leading disciple. The Shaikh's letters to her show how successfully she had crossed the stage of the *Wahdat al-Wujud*, and was able to find a firm place in the realm of the *Wahdat al-Shuhud*. Her death in 1080/1669 was a great loss both to the Emperor and to the Naqshbandiyyas, as is shown by the Shaikh's letter of condolence to the Emperor.<sup>2</sup> The Shaikh wrote letters to Prince Mu'azzam and Prince A'zam, and the Emperor in turn seems to have urged them to remain in touch with the Shaikh.<sup>3</sup> However, they did not take much interest in Naqshbandiyya sufism.

The letters to Muhtashim Khan exhibit the Shaikh's interest in him, and he seeks to convince the Khan of the significance of the Mujaddid's theories concerning the reality of Kaba,<sup>4</sup> and of other original contributions to sufi thought. One of the letters to him expresses the Shaikh's jubilation at Muhtashim's victory over the infidels, possibly during some minor campaign in Mewat.<sup>5</sup>

In his letter to Bakhtawar Khan, the Shaikh urges him to devote more attention to fulfilling the needs of the Muslims.<sup>6</sup> The letters to other important personalities seek to answer their objections to the Mujaddid's theories, and are designed to make them firm followers of the Mujaddidiyya order. A letter to Sultan 'Abdu'r-Rahman deals exclusively with the miraculous cures brought about by the drinking of water in which the Mujaddid's slippers had been dipped. The Shaikh informs him that he is now sending him some of that water, a few drops of which he should mix with his food and drink.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad A'zam, *Maktubat-i Saijiyya*, no. 4, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>ibid, no. 35, pp. 55-56.

<sup>3</sup>ibid, nos. 52, 53, pp. 73-76; 69, pp. 99-100.

<sup>4</sup>ibid, no. 19, pp. 34-35; *supra*, pp. 212-14.

<sup>5</sup>ibid, no. 167, pp. 191-92.

<sup>6</sup>ibid, no. 66, pp. 93-94.

<sup>7</sup>ibid, no. 186, p. 206; see *supra*, p. 230.



The most important letter is Letter No. 76, which as the contents show was written in 1092/1681. Although the Emperor had failed to crush the Rajputs of Marwar, on 7 Jumada II 1091/5 June 1680 he had forced Rana Jai Singh, the successor of Rana Raj Singh, to sue for peace by ceding two *parganas* in lieu of the *jizya*.<sup>1</sup> On a Ramazan 1092/15 September 1681, he had marched from Ajmer to the Deccan to crush the Marathas and the Shi'i states of the Deccan.<sup>2</sup> The Shaikh wrote that he and all Muslims were triumphantly rejoicing at the news of the submission of the Rana, the leader of the wicked infidels. Undoubtedly the submission of the Rana, and the victory over him, the realization of *jizya* and the presentation of huge gifts by him, were matters of great honour and distinction to the firm faith [Islam]. From the advent of Islam until then, no ruler had been able to subdue the Rana, the leader of the Indian infidels, let alone realize *jizya* from him. It was unlikely that Muslims of any other country had ever achieved such a victory, wrote the Shaikh, and therefore it was not unrealistic to consider that such a unique success was a sign of the appearance of Imam Mahdi. Since the victorious armies had marched against the Deccan for *jihad*, determined to cleanse the land of Islam from the defilements of rebellion and infidelity, and to clear the road to Mecca and Medina for the parties of pilgrims, the Shaikh had plunged himself into prayer for the success of the Emperor's blessed determination. Exhibiting his own inability to participate in that *jihad* to elevate God's name, the Shaikh assured the Emperor of his assistance with his prayers and concluded that even if the ascetics were to engage themselves in incessant prayers and ascetical exercises, their efforts would still not match the worship and prayers of those who were fighting *jihad*.<sup>3</sup>

In his letters to Aurangzib, Muhammad Naqshband expressed his indebtedness to the Emperor for fostering the development of the Prophet's *sunna*, and for promoting the Naqshbandiyya order.<sup>4</sup> He also congratulated him on his conquest of Hyderabad,<sup>5</sup> but neither in his letters to the Emperor nor to the nobles did he urge the Emperor to eliminate the *bid'a*, as his father, uncle and Shaikh Saifu'd-Din had done before him. Aurangzib had already issued a large number of puritanically orthodox legislations. However, many of the 'ulama' and sufis considered a number of mystical claims made by the Mujaddid, discussed earlier, sacrilegious to Sunni orthodoxy, and to satisfy the orthodox

<sup>1</sup>Musta'idd Khan, *Ma'asir-i Alamgiri*, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, p. 212.

<sup>3</sup>*Maktubat-i Saifiyya*, no. 76, pp. 112-13.

<sup>4</sup>Muhammad Naqshband, *Wasilatu'l-qubul ila'l-Allah wa'r-Rasul*, II, Hyderabad, Sind, 1963, no. 39, to the Emperor, p. 78.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, II, no. 59 to Bibi Jeo, some lady of the Royal Family, p. 74.



opponents of the Mujaddid, the teachings of the latter, as we have seen, were banned in 1090/1679.

Qazi Shaikhul-Islam,<sup>1</sup> son of Qazi 'Abdu'l-Wahhab who issued the imperial order (*hasbu'l-hukm*), was recognized as exceedingly pious and honest. Muhammad Naqshband did not consider it expedient to discuss with him the rights and wrongs of the orders issued. In reply to Shaikhul-Islam's letter to Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband, which seems to have differed from the imperial order, Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband tauntingly wrote how Shaikhul-Islam was issuing commands and directives, while he on his part was obedient and submissive. Defending himself, Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband wrote that he had never taught such lessons as were mentioned in the Qazi's letter, but whatever time he could spare from prayer, penitence and repentance of his sins, he devoted to the teaching of the *Sahih-Bukhari* and its commentaries. He did not consider himself sufficiently guided to make others his disciples. All the sufis associated with him, he wrote, were firm and pious Sunnis. They believed that all types of revelations and supernatural perceptions which did not strictly adhere to the *Shari'a* were perdition damned and aberrations. Referring to the works of the Mujaddid, the Shaikh wrote that many interpolations had been made into them and thus a mutilated and garbled treatise was ascribed to him. The Shaikh and his followers were not concerned with those fabricated works. He added that it was imperative that those who had perfect faith should seek the hidden meanings of the statements of eminent sufis, and should never forget that if a statement was made by a pious person, it should be interpreted in the light of his piety. The Shaikh concluded that he had already sent some excerpts from the works of the Mujaddid to the Qazi, and hoped that he would study them and bring them to the notice of the Emperor.<sup>2</sup>

The controversy did not die there, however. A letter by Shaikh Muhammad Farrukh Shah, the elder brother of Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad Wahdat, indicates that certain dissolutes had formed a party to raise a storm of opposition to the letters of the Mujaddid. Consequently, a large number of stupid fellows had been led astray, and even the Emperor was also "coloured in their colour" (i.e. ill-disposed to the works of the Mujaddid).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Qazi Shaikhul-Islam, son of Qazi 'Abdu'l-Wahhab, was appointed Qazi of the army after his father's death in 1086/1675, but unlike his father, he was exceedingly honest and frank. In 1094/1683 he resigned and a year later left for a pilgrimage to Mecca. Aurangzib was very deeply impressed with Shaikhul-Islam's abilities and piety, and accepted his resignation with great reluctance. *Ma'asir-i Alamgiri*, pp. 148, 239, 251.

<sup>2</sup>*Wasilatu'l-qubul*, letter no. 24, pp. 31-35.

<sup>3</sup>Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad Wahdat, *Gulshan-i Wahdat*, Hyderabad, Sind, 1966, appendix, p. 163.



It would seem that Muhammad Naqshband failed to receive the copies of the legal opinions (*istifta'*) of the hostile 'ulama'.<sup>1</sup> Sorely disappointed, he wrote to an anonymous dignitary that he understood the 'ulama' who had signed the *fatwa* themselves held vicious beliefs, were engrossed in corrupt practices, and were in fact latitudinarians when it came to religion. Many a time they had been challenged to discuss the issues at stake, but had never replied. It was strange, he wrote, that they were not concerned with the scoundrels and prevaricators who peopled the world, but instead had taken it upon themselves to condemn pious souls who had been adhering very strictly to the laws of the *Shari'a*.<sup>2</sup>

The Emperor, however, did not sever his connections with the Naqshbandiyya leaders. Around this period, Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband was very keen to go on pilgrimage to Mecca. The depredations of the Portuguese pirates had made the sea journey very unsafe however, and the Emperor would not allow his party to travel by boat.<sup>3</sup> The Shaikh reached as far as Kabul, intending to travel through Balkh, Bukhara, Baghdad and Syria,<sup>4</sup> but finally arrangements were made for their travel through Surat and, along with Shaikh Abdu'l-Ahad and a big party, he travelled on the imperial boat,<sup>5</sup> performing his pilgrimage in 1095/1683-4. It is possible that in Mecca and Medina they might have had discussions with the 'ulama' who were opposed to the Mujaddid. After his return about two years later, Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband called on the Emperor in the Deccan.<sup>6</sup> On his return journey he stayed at Aurangabad, where he hurriedly wrote a tract in refutation of the criticisms against the Mujaddid; but according to the Shaikh's own version, no one dared discuss the problems with him.<sup>7</sup>

A letter in the *Gulshan-i Wahdat* by Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad shows that the Emperor and his nobles had been deeply concerned with resolving the controversy surrounding the Mujaddid's letters before the imperial orders against the teachings of the letters were issued at Aurangabad. Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad wrote to his disciple Muhammad Murad Kashmiri that, during his stay in Delhi, some spiteful opponents of the Ahmadiyya order [Naqshbandiyya-Mujaddidiyya] had laid complaints before the Emperor that the teachings in the letters of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi violated the *Shari'a*, and were largely responsible for making the people both impious and heretical. Although the Naqshbandiyya leaders at the capital refuted these allegations, the Shaikh wrote, the common people

<sup>1</sup>*supra*, pp. 222-23.

<sup>2</sup>*Wasilatu'l-qubul*, I, letter no. 118, pp. 127-30.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, I, no. 124, p. 139; II, no. 24, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup>*ibid*, II, no. 50, pp. 90-91.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, II, no. 59, p. 101.

<sup>6</sup>*ibid*, II, no. 65, p. 105.

<sup>7</sup>*ibid*, II, no. 25, pp. 50-51.



were confused and horrified by the controversy. The Emperor invited the Shaikh to attend a meeting in the mosque of the Ghusul-Khana (privy chamber) for the purposes of discussing and countering the allegations made, and to clarify the controversies. However, Shaikh 'Abdul-Ahad wrote in reply that although it might appear that something in his grandfather's letters was contrary to the *Shari'a*, this was not so. Several mystical statements of the eminent sufis appearing in the letters could not be comprehended by those who did not have spiritual perception. It was not advisable therefore to discuss them publicly. Only Allah knew the truth of what was seemingly contrary to the *Shari'a*, and so the Shaikh should be excused from a public discussion. The Emperor, added the Shaikh, was convinced, and his dignitaries informed the Shaikh that although the Qazi was also present, it was not in an official capacity, and there was no law-suit being brought against him. However, if they should need to clarify some point they would write to him; but nothing, Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad wrote, was ever referred to him.<sup>1</sup>

Shaikh 'Abdu'l-Ahad's two letters to the Princess Zibu'n-Nisa, who was a poetess, are very fine literary pieces and suggest that she had also embarked upon attaining the Naqshbandiyya discipline.<sup>2</sup> The Shaikh's letter to Farrukhsiyar<sup>3</sup> tells us that the Emperor had started to receive training in *muraqiba* (meditation) under him.

Shaikh Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah's letters to Aurangzib also thank God for giving them an Emperor who had restored the puritanical Sunni *Shari'a*. However, the abundance of sinful innovations he ascribed to the nearness of the day of resurrection.<sup>4</sup> He sent to the Emperor a tract describing the importance of dissociation from infidels, which he had written for the Emperor's perusal.<sup>5</sup> During Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah's stay in the capital, the Emperor invited him to his palace several times and during his illness (he died in 1083/1672-73) saw to his medical treatment. In a letter the Shaikh wrote to Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband that the Emperor showed great respect to him and talked a great deal of Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband and Imam Ghazali, to whom he was very deeply devoted. He also presented a copy of the *Fatawa-i 'Alamgiri* to him (Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah) and invited his comments. Next day, the Emperor sent 200 *ashrafis* and 1000 rupees to him, but he did not accept the gifts and returned them. During his next visit, the Emperor said that he was highly impressed with Shaikh Muhammad Naqshband's asceticism, and promised to write a letter in his own hand. The letter concluded with an

<sup>1</sup>*Gulshan-i Wahdat*, letter no. 5, pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, nos. 44, 47, pp. 31-53, 55-58.

<sup>3</sup>*ibid*, no. 106, p. 155.

<sup>4</sup>Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah, *Khazinatu'l-ma'arif*, Hyderabad, Sind, 1973, no. 123, p. 141.

<sup>5</sup>*ibid*, no. 95, p. 122.



acknowledgement of the kindness of Prince Muhammad A'zam and Himmat Khan, in whose house the Shaikh was staying, and added that some of the Emperor's favourites had become his [Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah's] disciples.<sup>1</sup> A letter to the Emperor by Shaikh 'Ubaidu'llah acknowledged the excerpts from Ghazali's *Ihya' al-'ulum* sent to him.<sup>2</sup>

A close examination of the letters of Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, his brother, sons and nephew, tends to show that they did not play any part in influencing the political or economic policy of the Emperor. His policies of discrimination against the Hindus and Shi'is were confined to very limited political and economic spheres and were designed to implement Sunni orthodoxy which, according to him and his orthodox Sunni supporters, Dara-Shukoh and Shahjahan had rooted out. Shaikh Muhammad Ma'sum, Shaikh Muhammad Sa'id and their descendants and other Naqshbandiyyas only gave moral support through their prayers and good wishes. Aurangzib did help the Naqshbandiyyas, but not at the cost of political expediency.

<sup>1</sup>Muhammad 'Ubaidu'llah, *Khazinatul-Ma'arif*, no. 128, pp. 144-45.

<sup>2</sup>*ibid*, no. 130, p. 146.







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## Errata

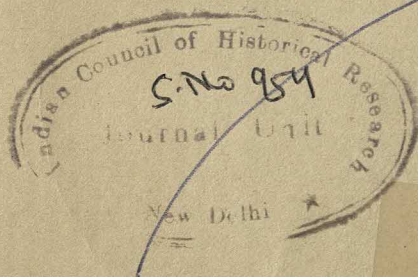
Page 16	line 9	<i>For sema'</i>	<i>read sama'</i>
Page 19	line 10	<i>For Jhani</i>	<i>read Jahni</i>
Page 19	line 14	<i>For asraru'l-abrar</i>	<i>read asrari'l-abrar</i>
Page 19	line 18	<i>For Adul-Ma'ali</i>	<i>read Abul-Ma'ali</i>
Page 26	line 9	<i>For Ma'nulat-i Mazhariyya</i>	<i>read Ma'mulat-i Mazhariyya</i>
Page 29	line 39	<i>For Manaqibu'l- mahbubin</i>	<i>read Manaqibu'l- mahbubain</i>
Page 29	line 40	<i>For Hadmidu'd-Din</i>	<i>read Hamidu'd-Din</i>
Page 59	line 36	<i>For Goda'i</i>	<i>read Gada'i</i>
Page 65	line 18	<i>For and been</i>	<i>read had been</i>
Page 102	line 26	<i>For Aurangzid's reign</i>	<i>read Aurangzib's reign</i>
Page 113	line 23	<i>For in Zat</i>	<i>read is Zat</i>
Page 129	line 22	<i>For dispair</i>	<i>read despair</i>
Page 148	line 6	<i>For Manaqib-i hazzaqiyya</i>	<i>read Manaqib-i Razzaqiyya</i>
Page 169	line 7	<i>For Qare Shattari</i>	<i>read Qari Shattari</i>
Page 235	line 28	<i>For ac ompendium</i>	<i>read a compendium</i>
Page 284	line 21	<i>For the shaikh Bhikari</i>	<i>read Shaikh Bhikari</i>
Page 284	line 22 to 27	<i>For On one occasion .....Bhikari</i>	<i>read See at the end</i>
Page 310	line 7	<i>For pretent</i>	<i>read pretend</i>
Page 313	line 34	<i>For latet</i>	<i>read later</i>
Page 320	line 4, 13	<i>For 'Ayn al-'ilm</i>	<i>read 'Ayn al-'ilm</i>
Page 321	line 21	<i>For Dii</i>	<i>read Diu</i>
Page 324	line 29	<i>For Jama' al-Jawamu</i>	<i>read Jama' at-Jawami'</i>
Page 326	line 11	<i>For remained</i>	<i>read reminded</i>
Page 327	line 7	<i>For age and forty</i>	<i>read age of forty</i>
Page 330	line 34	<i>For Anfasul-drifin</i>	<i>read Anfasul-'arifin</i>
Page 331	line 26	<i>For medina</i>	<i>read Medina</i>



Page 331	line 30	<i>For listener sama'</i>	<i>read sama' listener</i>
Page 337	line 19	<i>For a khwaja Baqi Billah</i>	<i>read Khwaja Baqi Bi'llah</i>
Page 340	line 35	<i>For kasir al-Inkhaligin</i>	<i>read Kasir al-Mukhalifin</i>
Page 341	line 8	<i>For kufr sarah</i>	<i>read kufr sarih</i>
Page 363	line 5	<i>For on rank</i>	<i>read no rank</i>
Page 368	line 24	<i>For Mir Saiyid Nr'matullah</i>	<i>read Mir Saiyid Ni'matullah</i>
Page 369	line 31	<i>For muslims</i>	<i>read Muslims</i>
Page 386	line 28	<i>For Chingiz khan (1206-1277)</i>	<i>read Chingiz Khan (1206-1227)</i>
Page 425	line 26	<i>For Mulla Muhibb 'Ali</i>	<i>read Mulla Muhibb 'Ali</i>
Page 434	line 5	<i>For Taju'd-Din Mahwai</i>	<i>read Tajud-Din Nahwi</i>
Page 459	line 20	<i>For like</i>	<i>read life</i>

p. 28 4 lines 22 to 27, read:

On one occasion he was in such a deep state of ecstasy that he took off all his clothes and wandered through the Burhanpur bazaar naked. Apparently Sultan Bahadur of Gujarat (1526-37) discovered Shah Mansur roaming in the bazaar of Burhanpur. The ruler tried to converse with him but the Shah ran towards the tomb of Shaikh Bhikari.



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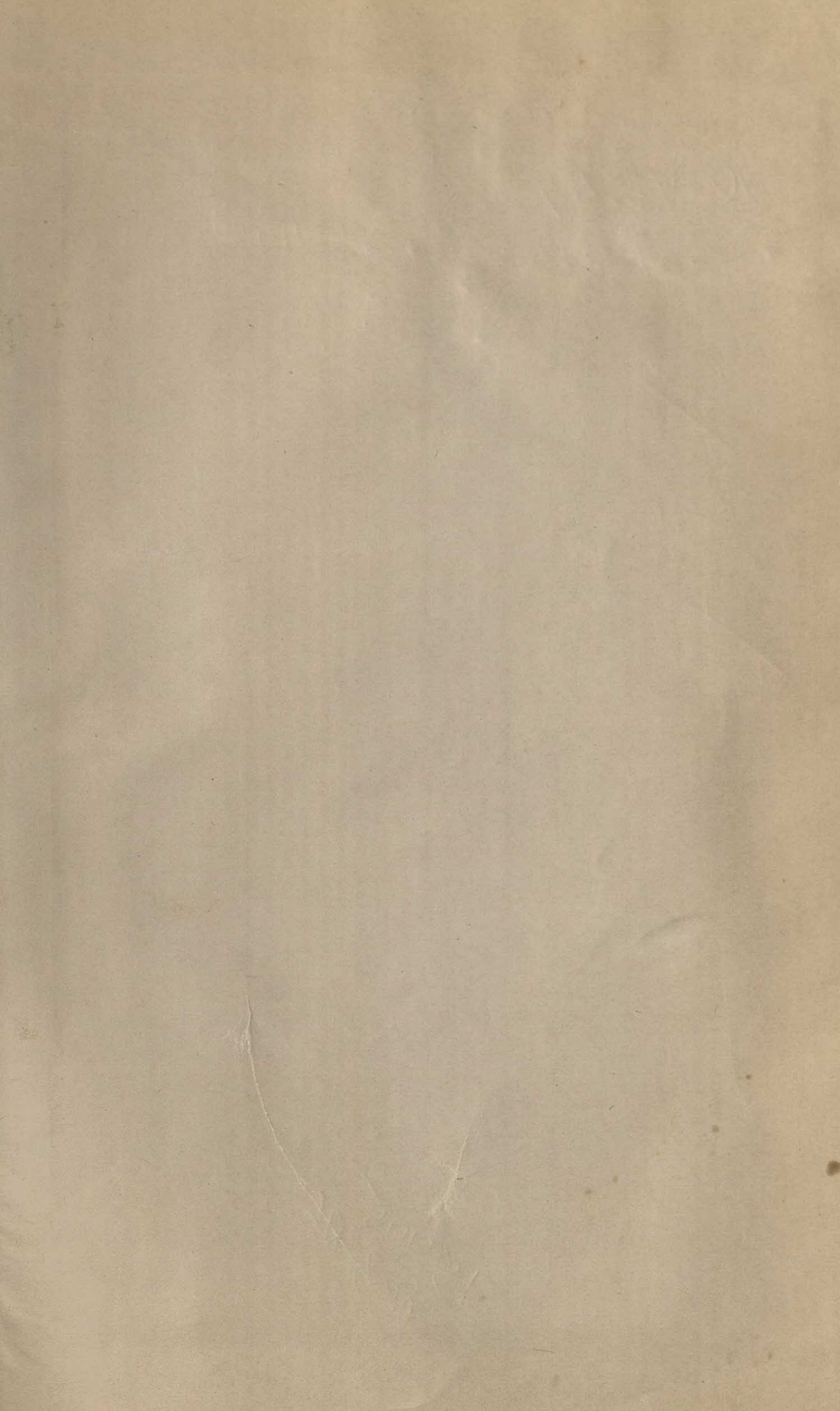




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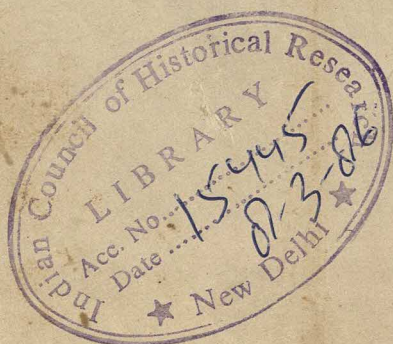
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